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LIGUORIAN

JULY, 1957

HOW TO BE GOOD PARENTS

QUESTIONS ABOUT WAR

QUIBBLES AGAINST CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

MARRIAGE OR COLLEGE?

THE WOMAN'S GOSPEL



YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH,

AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.



THE Liguorian

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*Devoted to the
Unchangeable Principles
of Truth, Justice,
Democracy and Religion,
and to All That
Brings Happiness to
Human Beings*

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Contents for July, 1957

| | |
|---|----|
| How To Be Good Parents | 1 |
| Life on the Farm | 7 |
| Give Me My Harp and Cloud | 9 |
| What Is the Disease in Modern Popular Music? | 13 |
| For the Shut-in: The Body Restored | 16 |
| Merciless Mourners | 17 |
| Fear of Pregnancy | 22 |
| Let Jesus Bless You! | 23 |
| Marriage or College? | 27 |
| Quibbles against Catholic Schools | 28 |
| Catholic and Protestant Bibles | 32 |
| Parking the Car for Mass | 33 |
| The Woman's Gospel | 34 |
| Readers Retort | 40 |
| Questions about War | 44 |
| For Parents of Retarded Children | 48 |
| Pointed Paragraphs | 54 |
| Liguoriana: Why Censorship? | 58 |
| Book Reviews | 61 |
| Lucid Intervals | 64 |

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THE LIGUORIAN IS INDEXED
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THE LIGUORIAN

LIGUORI, MO.

HOW TO BE GOOD PARENTS

IT is not easy to be good parents today. One may go farther and say that it is never "easy" to be such, because parenthood begets very serious obligations, and fallen human nature rather instinctively rebels against being obliged to anything. Today it is especially difficult to be good parents because so many persons who have brought children into the world have taken the easy way out and evaded the obligations that parenthood imposed upon them.

It is good, therefore, to review the principles that underlie the obligations of parents toward their children, and to point out some of the practical applications that must be made of the principles by fathers and mothers. The fourth commandment of God reads: "Honor thy father and thy mother." Implicit in this command, which is directed primarily to children, is the law that parents must rightly fulfill their obligations toward their children. To fulfill those obligations, parents must know them and ponder on them often.

Since there is so much abdication of parental responsibility today, with the result that patterns of wrong con-

duct are widely followed in the world, it is important that individual parents not only read the following principles and explanations for themselves, but that they get together with other Christian and Catholic parents and set up patterns of conduct that will oppose the fashions and standards followed by parents who don't know or don't care to know how rightly to exercise their parental authority. Groups of parents, therefore, should study and talk about these principles together, and encourage one another to put them into practice.

DONALD F. MILLER, C.S.S.R.

PRINCIPLE I.

The authority of parents is a delegation of the authority of God, transmitted to them by the very fact of their becoming parents, through which they are to direct their chil-

dren first, toward heaven, and second, toward a useful and happy life in this world.

God cooperates with parents in bringing children into the world, but God does the major part. He creates an immortal human soul for every child and has supreme authority over that soul. This authority He delegates to the parents for the proper upbringing of the child.

Therefore the authority of parents over their children must be exercised with definite ends in view, and with a clear knowledge of the proper means to those ends.

The first end is always the salvation of the child's soul. The secondary end is the living of a good and useful and happy life on earth.

The means are threefold: 1) a knowledge of God, attained through faith and reason, and of all that God has revealed to man; 2) observance of God's laws, as made known through the teachings of Christ and His Church; 3) the use of prayer and the sacramental system Christ established as the means of growing in positive grace.

Leading a child toward its proper goals, through the right means, will require personal instruction, correction of faults, discipline of the will, and, at times, reasonable punishment.

PRINCIPLE II.

The authority of parents will never be effective in directing a child properly unless it be exercised against the background of manifest love.

God never commands human beings without at the same time showing His love for them. Indeed, all the commands of God are in some way expressions of His love. It was this love that inspired Him to go so far as to die for mankind.

Since the authority of parents is a delegation of the authority of God, its exercise must be accompanied by the same kind of love that God has shown to all His children. This love must be *manifest*, so that the children will see that the same parents who command them love them wholeheartedly.

The love of parents is made manifest only through sacrifice, respect for the human nature of their children, companionship and a deep interest in the studies, the work, the play and the progress of their children. It does not injure the children by coddling them; it does not stunt them by unreasonable severity in its demands and punishments. It makes the children constantly aware that the parents want their happiness, both eternal and temporal, even when discipline and correction and punishment are required.

PRINCIPLE III.

The authority of parents will rarely be effectively exercised unless it is backed up by their good example.

In all moral and spiritual matters, the example of parents should be the first teacher of their children; explanations, commands, prohibitions, corrections are of little lasting value unless the good example is there.

Thus parents who rarely receive the sacraments, who are guilty of frequent profanity and even obscenity in speech, who often quarrel with each other, will accomplish little or nothing by commanding their children to do otherwise than they do. The children may obey for a while, at least when they are very young; but almost inevitably and eventually the children will follow the example of their parents and not their commands.

PRINCIPLE IV.

The authority of parents must be exercised with full recognition of the differences of treatment required by the differences of temperament, sex and age in their children.

Every child born into the world is a distinct human personality, with its own particular disposition and temperament, with the special characteristics of its sex, and with a need for different kinds of treatment as it advances more and more toward maturity.

Basic to the needs of all children, however, is that they be trained to respect the authority of their parents from their earliest years. Parents who let their children have their own way throughout childhood will never win them to obedience in later years. It is hopeless to try to direct a child toward good and to rescue it from evil by beginning to exercise authority only when the child is advancing into its teens.

At the same time each child must be looked upon as an individual boy or girl, and as subject to growth and development requiring changes of ap-

proach on the part of parents as the child advances toward greater and greater maturity.

Thus the father will be on guard against trying to deal with his daughter in the same manner as he directs his sons; and the mother will beware of trying to mold a son's character according to the same pattern as that of a daughter.

Thus both parents will study to learn the individual temperaments of their children and to direct them accordingly. They will come to realize that a moody child needs encouragement and the building up of self-confidence; an extrovert child needs discipline, order and frequent correction; a child with a tendency to want to dominate others needs praise and at the same time humility; a lazy or phlegmatic child needs frequent prods administered with patience and understanding. Despite all this no child can get along without respect for parental authority instilled at the earliest age.

As the child grows into its teens, the authority of parents gradually expresses itself more often in suggestions, directives and even wishes rather than in sharp commands. This will work out only if the children have always been trained to respect the authority of their parents and to recognize their love. Too many parents make the mistake of commanding a fifteen-year-old to do things in the same manner as they would a five-year-old child.

PRINCIPLE V.

The authority of father and mother must be mutually exercised, each

contributing what is most natural to their particular role.

The mutual exercise of parental authority means that neither one will abdicate authority, nor delegate to the other the making of all decisions concerning the direction, correction and punishment of the children. Fathers, in particular, do great harm to their children (and, incidentally, to their wives) who, in all problems and questions that arise concerning the children, say to them: "Let your mother decide."

Each parent has something to contribute toward the proper development of a child. By the design of nature, a father leans toward justice and severity; the mother toward mercy and leniency. Both these shadings of authority are needed for the rounded development of the child. Children need to see the father and mother working together, complementing each other, in bringing them up. Above all, it is important that they never be given grounds for "playing" their father and mother against each other.

Therefore the father must permit his masculine sense of justice to be tempered at times by the mother's leaning toward mercy; the mother must want her feminine leniency to be bolstered by the father's instinct toward strictness. Yet decisions must appear to the children as coming from both parents, the one always supporting and upholding the other when the decision has been mutually made.

PRINCIPLE VI.

The authority of Christian parents must be exercised with full recognition of the fact that false, dangerous and bad standards of conduct are approved or tolerated by many parents in the world today, and that Christian parents must band together to reject and resist all such standards.

The grave mistake of many Christian parents is to let themselves be swayed by customs, practices and permissions that are indulged by children who have parents "who don't care," or who are guided by wrong principles. They cannot resist the plaintive appeal of children: "Other parents allow these things; why shouldn't they be allowed to me?"

Children, even in their teens, cannot be expected to make the distinction between the good and the bad, the dangerous and the harmless, in the customs that are prevalent around them. Indeed, they of all human beings are most apt to call upon the false principle that what is widely done is rightly done. At the same time, widespread experience proves that children want to be guided; they want to be told by their parents what they should do and not do.

Therefore parents are bound to use their own knowledge and experience, their own faith and principle, to guide and direct their children toward what is good and away from what is bad, no matter what the popular modes of juvenile conduct may be. And because the weight of false principle and bad example is so great,

they need to get together with other parents like themselves, and to establish norms and rules that all will observe together. The effect will be that no child of Catholic parents will be able to say: "You are the only parents in the world who ask or demand such-and-such of me."

A number of clear examples of the contradiction between what is popular or widely permitted and what is right can be set down. Under each heading below the wrong principle or practice will be set down followed by the right.

1. Recreation outside the home.

Wrong: Parents need not be concerned about the circumstances in which their children seek recreation outside the home.

Right: Parents are bound to know and pass judgment on 1) where their children (including teen-agers) go for recreation; 2) with whom they go; 3) how long they will be away from home. In a rightly run home, definite rules regarding these three points will be laid down and enforced for the children from their earliest years to their late teens.

2. Recreation in the home.

Wrong: Parents are justified in discouraging gatherings or parties of their children with their friends in their own home. If on occasion such parties are permitted, the parents need not be bothered with supervising or chaperoning them in any way.

Right: Parents have an obligation to welcome the friends of their children into their home for informal or formal gatherings, because this is the

only adequate way in which they can get to know the kind of company their children keep. Further, they are *obliged* (this word should be unnecessary: it were better said, "they should desire") to chaperone and take part in such gatherings, and enforce definite rules concerning modesty, decency and propriety at all times. "Crashing" should be prohibited, and break-up times agreed upon and observed.

3. Company-keeping.

Wrong: There is no harm, and perhaps some good, in permitting a youngster in the eighth grade or in the three early years of high school, to keep steady company, that is, regularly to have "dates" exclusively with a certain individual.

Right: Steady company-keeping is lawful only when marriage is considered possible and desirable within a reasonable period of time, which may be estimated at about a year. There are two reasons for this. The first and most important is that steady company-keeping without prospect of marriage within a reasonable time practically always leads in due course to sins of impurity. The second reason is that no child can acquire a worthwhile high school education if it is distracted from its studies by an immature love-affair.

On this principle parents are bound to prohibit steady company-keeping to their children at least until the latter part of their senior year in high school. Even then it may be permitted only if the teen-ager is willing, with the seriously considered advice

of parents, to face the prospect of marriage shortly after the completion of high school. If a high school senior seriously plans on going to college or university, the parents should inform him (or her) that steady company-keeping in high school represents a decision to give up all thought of college or university, and that they (the parents) will enforce that decision.

4. Sex-instruction

Wrong: Parents may trust that their children will learn all they need to know about sex from their teachers, their companions, and from books and magazines.

Right: Parents have the primary responsibility for seeing to it that their children are not only properly informed on matters of sex, but prepared to meet the problems that will arise in this matter.

On no point in the upbringing of children, is it more important today that Christian and Catholic parents inform and train their children properly than in the matter of sex. On no

point should they be more aware of the false principles their children may learn from companions and bad reading than here. For the task involved they should prepare themselves by well-directed Catholic reading and study, and by discussions with other responsible Catholic parents.



THERE are many other topics on which a false or dangerous principle for parents might be set down, and true norms succinctly stated. Some such topics are 1) the use of the family car; 2) money and allowances for children; 3) the use of alcohol; 4) the taking of jobs by children and the disposition of the income from such jobs; 5) proper attitudes toward school authorities, and toward the pastor and the parish church. Serious thinking about these matters, and discussions from other parents, against the background of the principles set down above, will reveal to them what sort of program will be to the best eternal and temporal interests of their children.

IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS

Please notify us promptly of your change of address, giving both your old and new address. It makes it easy for our office if you cut your stenciled address from the rear cover of one of your issues of *THE LIGUORIAN* and send it in when asking for a change of address. Notify us by the tenth of the month if your copy for that month has not been delivered.

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Problems

of

Professional People

Life on the Farm

THE farms of America are the support of America. Without the grain and the vegetables and the fruit that are raised year after year on the vast tracts of arable land given to the United States by the Creator our American people would perish. Hence, those who are spending their lives in farm work are performing an immeasurably beneficial task for the maintenance and the progress of our nation.

However, the work of farming is not easy. It is true, in recent years the ingenious devices of mechanical science have lessened the labors of farming and given farmers the opportunity of enjoying a few hours of leisure in the course of the day. But effort and energy and self-sacrifice are still needed in those who make the raising of crops the chief occupation of their lives. The uncertainty of weather conditions is a constant source of anxiety to the man whose success depends so much on rain and sunshine. The farmer must expect some bad years, when no scientific inventions can bring to fruition the seeds that he has so carefully planted and so diligently cared for. Because of such difficulties and uncertainties many young persons are now leaving the farms of America and seeking what they believe to be more gratifying and more secure jobs in the cities.

But this is a grave mistake. The farm still affords one of the most contented and most secure modes of livelihood in our country. Those who choose this manner of life and are prepared to devote to their work all the abilities of body and mind that God has given them have good assurance of a comfortable and contented life. They will spend their days in the fresh, invigorating air and sunlight; their evenings will be passed in domestic peace and quiet, free from the noise and excitement of the city. They will have honest and friendly neighbors; their social gatherings will be less likely to be intemperate and immoral than similar occasions in urban sections. They have a good guarantee that their children will grow up as healthy and happy boys and girls, free from the demoralizing influences that abound in big cities today.

In the farm industry there is less temptation to be dishonest than there is in the average big business of today. The farmer can be upright in his dealings with all men without fear of losing his job if he does not collaborate in some crooked deal. He can demand a reasonable price for his product that will give him a fair profit without inflicting injustice on his fellow men.

ABOVE all, the farmer is a fortunate man from the supernatural standpoint. He can easily regulate his life in accordance with our Lord's two great

commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and soul. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Each morning as he begins his tasks, he can make a fervent act of love for God, thanking his heavenly Father for the privilege of cooperating with Him in providing His children with their "daily bread," and offering to God as an act of love all the work of the coming day. And from the same motive of supernatural

charity he can direct his toil to the benefit of his fellow men — because in them he beholds the image of Him who said: "I was hungry and you gave me to eat." Beyond doubt, a good life on the farm is one of the surest ways to win eternal happiness in the kingdom of heaven.

Very Rev. Francis J. Connell,
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THE WISE SOLOMON OF PARIS

To a justice of the peace in Paris there came one day a couple bent on getting a divorce. after ten years of married life.

"Have you children?" asked the judge.

"Yes," answered the husband, "we have three children. I want two of them and so does my wife."

The judge considered for a moment.

"Are you willing to accept my decision?" he asked.

The two partners, although sick of marriage, consented.

"We are going to wait," said the judge, "until you have another child. Then you come back and the division will be a very simple matter, indeed."

The couple couldn't help smiling, notwithstanding the seriousness of the situation, and submitted to the decision.

The judge waited for years but the couple did not return. Finally he happened to meet the husband on the street one day. "Well, what about the divorce?" he asked.

"Impossible," replied the man. "We now have five children."

"In that case," said the judge smiling, "we shall have to wait a little longer."

Catholic Apostolate

20-20 VISION

An old bishop of the Church in Italy was once approached by an American for an explanation of his radiant disposition. It was well known that the aged prelate had borne many trials without complaining; in the face of adversity, he always kept cheerful.

"How do you manage to stay happy all the time?" asked the pilgrim.

The good bishop smiled.

"It consists in a simple thing," he replied, "and that is making the right use of my eyes."

In astonishment the visitor pressed for further information.

"It is all very matter of fact," said the old man. "In whatsoever state I am, I first of all look up to heaven and remember that my great business is to get there. Then, I look down upon the earth and call to mind how small a space I shall soon find in it. Finally, I look abroad upon the world and observe the multitudes that are in all respects less fortunate than myself.

"Thus, I learn where all my cares must end and how little reason I ever had to murmur or to be otherwise than thankful. To live in this spirit, my son, is to be always happy."

Franciscan Message

Whatever else we can say about heaven, it is certainly not going to be a sugar-sweet, prim, pious and everlasting bore.

GIVE ME MY HARP AND CLOUD

Bernard F. McWilliams, C.S.S.R.

IF you don't like the idea of leaving this world, maybe the insurance companies are to blame. After all, they bet money on the hope that you will live a long time. So to protect their investment, they run advertisements showing the horror of highway accidents and the foolhardiness of not taking care of your health. They clearly point out that death is most undesirable.

Well, nobody can be blamed for shuddering a little at the thought of "passing on." Many people and most Catholics are uneasy about the possibility of going to hell. But why should they be cold and unenthusiastic about going to heaven?

Blame it on whomsoever you will — the morbid preoccupation of the insurance companies, the song-writers who tell us that "it's later than you think," the Communists who scoff at priests for promising "pie in the sky," the cartoonists who make heaven look positively ridiculous, the artists who don't do much better or the devil himself who, subtle as he is, probably has a very big hand in creating the

popular impression of heaven — cast the blame where you will, the fact remains that heaven sounds like a pretty dull and grim business to most people.

If you have attended the wake of a young person lately, you will no doubt remember hearing people say (and perhaps thinking the same thing yourself), "What a shame to die so young — to have enjoyed life such a short time."

DEATH is a sad and almost unbearable heartache to the living who loved. But why should it be made more sad and unbearable by thinking unconsciously that the loved one, instead of enjoying life, lies rotting in his all-weather-proof, satin-lined casket, barely able to hear the murmur of the cypresses above? Of course, most Christians believe that the soul of a good person goes off to heaven. But why do we believe that this is somehow not a very wholesome thing to have happen to a loved one? Why are we indifferent about going there ourselves?

The answer, partly, is that the word of God does not give us a very clear picture of heaven. St. Paul tells us that eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor hath it entered into the heart of man what things God has prepared for them who love Him. There is no attempt in the Bible to describe accurately the wonder of heaven, simply because it is indescribable. But we have taken the little that the Bible has to say about heaven and twisted it into a grotesque and very unappetizing concept of everlasting happiness.

If you were to believe, or at least be influenced by, what you heard, saw and read about heaven, here is how you would probably picture your arrival in heaven. Your soul, in a wraith-like, vaporish reproduction of you all over, goes spiralling out of your now dead body, and you are off on your first interplanetary journey. You swoosh out beyond the farthest star and there you arrive at the pearly gates.

AH yes, the pearly gates, the Ellis Island of heaven. With a casual, bored air and a witticism or two (certainly you've heard some of those jokes about St. Peter) the keeper checks your credentials and opens up to you the pearly gates. Once inside you are clothed with a white robe, not unlike the one you just left behind in the hospital. Then you are given a harp and assigned a spot on a rather unsubstantial-looking cloud. You don't get a chance to speak to anybody because "services" are in progress. The choirs of heaven are

singing and they go on and on and on. You look around and see just what you were led to expect to see from the stained-glass windows of your church. The blessed are all sitting around on clouds, thrumming on their inevitable harps, singing up a storm and staring raptly at God. You look in the direction in which they are staring and you see God. And you are not surprised. There He is, a venerable old man, with a long flowing beard. Over His head floats a white dove, the Holy Ghost. Christ sits at the right hand of the Father, looking pleased with the singing. Squadrons of angels hang overhead, treading air like so many hummingbirds. And there you sit and sing, on and on, endlessly, trying to feel happy about the whole thing.

No wonder, then, as you lay dying in a hospital bed, you felt sad at leaving the warm and affectionate embrace of your loved ones. No wonder you envied the ebullience and good health of the friends who came to visit you and lied to you about your progress, fearing every moment that they would betray by some word or gesture that they thought you were a "goner." Perhaps even the priest hesitated to point out to you that the unspeakable joys of heaven were awaiting you. Why so?

Well, the priest may feel that he has to safeguard his ability to be at the bedside of any dying person and that if he gained the reputation of telling people they were going to die, he might find it increasingly difficult to gain entrance to the next bedside and the next. It's already difficult

enough for him as it is. Many people still think that to call the priest is to sign the death warrant of the loved one. In other words, no one must ever be told that he will soon be in heaven. The thought is too horrible for words!

BUT is it? Whatever else we can say about heaven, it is certainly not going to be a sugar-sweet, prim, pious and everlasting bore. The very least we can say — and this with the utmost certainty — is that in heaven we are going to find happiness beyond our rosiest dreams. For this reason if for no other we should not be unduly alarmed at the prospect of leaving this world. In fact, the deeper our faith, the more pleasing this prospect becomes.

So once and for all, let us disabuse ourselves of the utterly false concepts of heaven delineated in the cartoons and even in the stained-glass windows. Let us even dismiss as a question of semantics the, for us, depressing descriptions given by some of the saints. Let us cling fast to the conviction that eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor hath it entered into the heart of man what things God has prepared for them that love Him.

However, there is room for profitable speculation about the "furniture of heaven." St. John's description of heaven in the Apocalypse is highly allegorical but it does indicate that there is a richness and a splendor in heaven that defies description. If God could make so many corners of this very temporary world so exquisitely beautiful, there is every reason to believe that the very permanent scenery

of heaven will leave us constantly gaping in joyous surprise.

Take the question of color alone. We are surrounded by ever-changing hues on land, sea and air. Then why should the colors of heaven not be every bit as brilliant? You see, artists in their efforts to picture heaven as a cloudy realm have bathed it with an ethereal whiteness. But if there is color on earth, why can we not imagine that heaven is bathed in wondrous, ever-changing, ever-new colors — rare and rich colors that we have never seen before? (Eye hath not seen!)

THEN there is the question of music. (Nor ear heard!) You may not be one of the many millions who are left limp with joyous emotion on hearing a Brahms piano concerto. But certainly you are immensely gratified on hearing a smooth new Montavani arrangement or some sprightly stuff by Hugo Winterhalter. Even if you are completely tone-deaf, you have certainly found pleasure in Guy Lombardo's "sweetest music this side of heaven." (Now that we're on the subject.)

So if music can bring great joy to our humdrum earthly lives, why can we not rightfully expect that the music of heaven will be, not a strenuous, everlasting hymn-sing, but an aural experience of profound emotional depth? Why can we not expect that the music of heaven will be replete with never-before-heard harmonies, fantastic tone-colors, rare and constantly changing instrumental sounds and rhythms, thematic devel-

opments that will stagger a Beethoven with their never-cloying inventiveness? If we think of heavenly music in terms of the horrible dreariness of many of our hymns, we have just one more reason for dreading our departure from this life.

Then again, will we be assigned a cloud to sit on for all eternity? Christ has said: "In my Father's kingdom there are many mansions." Now we can't form an accurate picture of what these mansions are going to look like. But we do gather from these words of Christ that we are going to live in the most opulent surroundings imaginable. If man can put up some very captivating residences, cannot God easily outstrip man to an infinite degree? And if this miserable planet can produce such beautiful marbles and silks and precious metals, will not heaven have all these things and much, much more? Isn't it possible that we will be surrounded by inconceivably beautiful materials that we have never seen before? Maybe we will have to wear white sheets. But who says so? If fashion designers can perform miracles with the humble materials at hand, God can certainly come up with something more than a white sheet.

Then take the people in heaven. Unquestionably, to the last man and the last woman, they will be extraordinarily beautiful. Their voices will be a delight to hear. Their dispositions will never sour. We will finally all love one another. It will be like Christmas all the time. We will enjoy the best of health; no more headaches, backaches, constipation, bad

teeth; no more fatigue, no more growing old or slowing down; perpetual youth, unfailing vigor, perfect euphoria to the *n*th degree.

WILL there be sex in heaven? Of course not; no more than there will be letter-carriers or stevedores. There will be no need or desire for it. Sex, when legitimate, is a way of expressing love. If not, it's nothing at all. Now in heaven we will love one another spontaneously, joyously, intensely, experiencing in this love a happiness far beyond anything we can know in this life.

And so we come to the consideration of what will be our greatest happiness in heaven. God created us for happiness. Now He so created us that our happiness must come from love. But He has seen fit to give us a boundless capacity, an insatiable craving for love. It so happens that God is the only One Who can love with a boundless love. And so our greatest happiness will be to be caught up in the warm embrace of God, to be overwhelmed by love, to know love in its perfection, fulness, splendor, beauty and everlasting ecstasy. And out of that love will come a joy that will be somewhat like the brief ecstasy that now and again we know in this life except that this new joy will be something vast and endless, something breathless and staggering, something fierce but yet, something bearable.

All this will be ours if, in the brief time allotted to us here below, we learn to love God and our neighbor. Nothing more is asked of us, nothing more expected.

Feature Letter

What Is the Disease in Modern Popular Music?

THE letter we publish this month as the feature letter was written by a teacher in one of our eastern states.

* * *

Dear Fathers:

I have a question box in the eighth grade classroom, and fully one-half of the questions for some time were: "Why don't you like Elvis Presley?"

Perhaps we could widen the scope and ask instead, "What's wrong with many modern popular singers today?" Actually, there is nothing especially wrong with them. They are good-looking, have musical ability and usually some personality. God created them, gave them talents, and they have, in many cases, used their talent. Yet these singers, Presley especially, are a medium, a carrier of something. They are the means by which an idea goes from one mind and buries itself in the mind of another, sometimes completely unknown to the carrier. It is this idea or attitude which we find wrong.

What should we do? Suppose we have a waitress in a restaurant who is beautiful, efficient and pleasant.

Almost every month we receive a few letters from readers which are excellent expressions of opinion, but too lengthy to be published in full in the limited space of the Readers Retort section and too worthwhile to be printed only in part. Whenever we judge such a letter worthy of publication we shall give special space to it in this department called **FEATURE LETTER**.

We find out that she is a carrier of typhoid. But she is so beautiful! How could anything be wrong with her? Ugly diseases have a way of lurking under the most beautiful forms. In this case, we must either dismiss the waitress, or correct her physical condition.

What is the disease in today's music? Some call it worldliness; some call it secularism. I find it chiefly this: an acceptance of sinful attitudes as normal and natural, and not sinful at all. Pope Pius XII said of the present world that it is losing its sense of sin. You can well believe that when you hear the words of some popular songs: "Oh, what a night to hold you near, oh, what a night to squeeze you . . . you thrill me so, when you hold me tight . . . when you touch my lips, what a thrill I get . . . when that thrill is young, that's when love is strong . . . don't forbid me to hold you tight . . . let me hold you in my

lovin' arms, 'cause it's cold and I can keep you warm . . . if you prove there's something we've been missin', later on there'll be a little kissin'." This goes on, song after song. When all these words are accompanied by rhythmic music which stirs the passions accordingly and persistently tells that passion is really love, hugging and petting and necking are normal and natural, and that going steady is the thing to do, it is no wonder that we have such incredible license among teen-agers. Add to this the litanies of "John is going with Jane" that the disc-jockeys often throw in between records, and you have American youth absorbing worldliness in its most palatable form for about two hours a day.

Is all this doing any harm? Ask the teen-agers some pertinent questions some day. Going steady is the thing to do; it is obviously not a sin no matter how remote the possibilities of marriage may be. Petting and necking are not sinful, so long as you do not do anything BAD! Fun can be had only in boy-girl kissing games.

Now the heartbreak of this is not so much that our teen-agers are sinning along these lines; far more insidious, it is that they do not acknowledge these things as sinful. In former days we had as much sin, perhaps, as we have now, but the sinner knew that he was sinning. In this knowledge that sin was sin there was at least some hope of repentance and correction. Today that does not hold true. Sin along these lines is taken as commonplace enjoyment and not

sin at all. Popular music may not be making young people sin more; but it is destroying their conscience with regard to what is sinful and what is not.

Is all this really happening? The evidence overwhelmingly says yes. To take an evident example, the close association of the sexes on the teen-age level has taken its toll. Boys and girls up to about 18 years of age learn by imitation in many things. When the young men and young women associate closely after becoming 18 years of age, then, as God planned it, they become more themselves: the men more manly, the women more womanly, as supplements to each other. But when they associate too young, they imitate. That is why the boys of today are getting girlish; putting their hair up into "pretty" waves and curls, wearing long hair, showing over-pre-occupation with their looks and clothing, and neglecting the real interests of boys: exploring, hiking, camping, building, making. Girls on the other hand tend to become more boyish: slacks, sloppy jackets, men's shirts hanging out, hacked-off hair styles, cigarettes, tough talk and vulgarisms and, God help us, profane and obscene language.

The tendency among popular singers, many of them, is to foster this type of effeminacy in boys by portraying themselves in girlish and feminine poses, bizarre and slinky garments. In one picture, the singer has a hand-mirror in one hand and a comb in the other and is daintily combing his locks. In another he is facing the

camera, moon-eyed, with his hands clasped seductively under his chin.

However, it is better to light a candle than curse the darkness. By way of recommendation may I urge parents to limit severely the time their children spend in listening to the brash, passion-pitted, love-loony kind of popular music? Encourage them to love music, but the right kind. There are many teen-agers who are not listening to the diseased brand of music featured by many of our singers. They have learned that there are hours of enjoyment in listening to semi-classical and classical and operatic music, to folk songs and respectable popular songs. Any human being will love beauty when he finds it. There is beauty in music — but in the right kind. Therefore, don't tell your teen-agers merely, "I forbid you to listen to this lousy stuff!" Help them to find beauty. Don't merely wipe popular music out of their life with a swish of your hand. Give them a substitute. Give them the real thing. Give them good music and help them to appreciate it.

A TEACHER.

* * *

God is concerned not so much with the rhetoric of our prayers, how eloquent they are; nor with the melody of our prayers, how musical they are; nor with the arithmetic of our prayers, how many they are; but He is concerned with the sincerity of our prayers, how heart-sprung they are.

Forty Steps to Easter
(Bruce)

July, 1957

CRUCIFIX IN THE CONFESSIONAL

On Calvary there were very few at the foot of the cross. But ever since Calvary, men have been kneeling to receive the fruits of victory from the cross. A crucifix usually hangs in the confessional. It belongs there. For in the sacramental moment when God forgives our sins, it reminds us that Christ died upon the cross to win the guarantee of that forgiveness. "What is the ransom that freed us?" asked St. Peter. "You know well enough," he answers, "that it was not paid in earthly currency, silver or gold; it was paid in the precious blood of Christ. No lamb was ever so pure, so spotless a victim." And every confession, from the Good Thief to the end of time, means that a mighty army of penitents are presented to God, kneeling one by one to be washed in the blood of the Lamb. The Father is glorified and the heart of Christ is glad.

Fr. J. T. Nolan in Today

* * *

A FULL-TIME JOB

A priest was one day walking along a street in one of our large cities, when a man suddenly addressed him with the words:

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!"

"Thank you," said the priest. "That's a very good text; a very good text, indeed. But wait a moment. I did not ask you for it, did I?"

"No, sir," replied the man.

"Then it is only fair that I should give you one in return, is it not?"

"Yes, sir," answered the man.

"Then here you are: *If you would enter into life, keep the commandments.* You will find it a full-time job."

Thoughts for the Shut-in

The Body Restored

Leonard F. Hyland, C.S.S.R.

FOR chronic invalids there is bound to be an occasional feeling of regret at the memory of past physical strength and vitality. Perhaps they enjoyed many years of vigorous good health, able to take long walks and engage in strenuous athletic activities. Now all that is a thing of the past. Weakened by illness or crippled by an accident, they have, barring a miracle, no hope of rehabilitation.

Shut-ins who let themselves nurse along such vain regrets can make themselves intensely dissatisfied and unhappy. In such temptations to discouragement, let them take heart and hope in the consoling teaching of Christ and the Church on the resurrection of the human body at the end of time.

At death, by our sad human experience, the body dies, and the soul is separated from it for a time, proceeding to that condition of happiness or pain which it has deserved by its manner of life here on earth. In the dead body then there sets in immediately the process of decay which, after a sufficient period of time, reduces the mortal remains to dust and ashes.

But this is not the end. God has seen fit to reveal to us His mighty plan. When in due course human history comes to its appointed close, God will reach down from heaven and raise up the countless human bodies from the dust into which they have fallen. Surely it would be foolish for anyone to deny that such a thing is possible to God. If God made the world from nothing, He can surely cause human bodies to rise out of dust.

These bodies will rejoin the souls which departed from them at death. If by a

good life and a death in God's grace, they have deserved heaven, they will have certain characteristics which the hopeless invalid may look forward to with joy and gladness in his heart.

First, these risen bodies will be incapable of suffering. No pain, no injury, no disease will henceforth be able to touch them in any way. Rather there will be a constant and vigorous condition of good health.

These risen bodies also will be incredibly swift of movement in the life to come. Faster than jet-propelled planes, faster than the speed of light itself, in that strange new and wonderful world they will be able to transport themselves from place to place.

These risen bodies, glorified as was Christ's body after the resurrection, will no longer be confined and hedged in by material obstacles and hazards. Christ in His risen body came through closed doors, and this quality will belong to all risen bodies.

LAST of all, the risen body will be brilliant and glorious with beauty, so beautiful, indeed, that if such a one were to appear to mortal men on earth, their eyes would be dazzled and blinded and they would fall in a faint to the ground. Thus it happened when our Saviour was transfigured before the apostles. This same shining glory will belong to all who die and rise again in the friendship of Christ.

Thoughts like these can bring consolation to the sick, and can make pain bearable and fruitful, in view of the promised reward.

MERCILESS

MOURNERS

When death comes to a family, Christianity does not deprive the human heart of feeling nor forbid the display of grief. But grief is sincere as a proof of love when it is accompanied by charity.

WE lay down here a few simple rules to be followed, by those who proclaim themselves Christians, when death strikes or threatens a member of the family or one who for long has been a close and cherished friend. Charity at no time is in greater demand than at the time of the final summons for the one "appointed this day to die;" charity is the last gift that can be given by those who are left behind to mourn.

The first true act of charity that a Christian can perform for a man who has been stricken with a sudden illness or who has been the victim of an accident is to call the priest in order that the last sacraments may be administered. There is nothing more important in all the world than that a man receive the last sacraments before he dies. He does not take his fortune or his fame or his beloved family with him when he leaves this

earth. But he does take with him the fruits that have been gathered by a worthy reception of the holy sacraments.

Doctor and Priest

THEREFORE, it is no true act of charity to call the doctor when one's mother or one's father is gravely ill and to express one's sorrow at the tragedy in tears and tremors, but to forget all about the priest and the saving sacraments that he can give. No doubt the doctor is necessary in time of serious sickness. It would be cruel and unforgivable to neglect to obtain the assistance of a doctor when it is possible for such a one to exercise his science in an effort to provide a cure or at least to effect a diminution of the suffering that accompanies the disease.

But doctors, as such, are primarily concerned with the body. They have no medicine that will bring grace to the soul. If the body is destined by God shortly to die, if the body is beyond the help and the knowledge of medicine, then all the doctors in the world can avail it nothing. What is needed in that emergency is not a doctor but a priest.

A priest's mission is to provide help for the soul at all times during life but especially at that most important time when life is coming to an end. The priest may not be able to do anything for the body, but he can save the soul by administering the last sacraments.

The sacrament of extreme unction, or the anointing of the five senses with consecrated oil, administered to a man who is dying, can take away even mortal sin, when confession is made impossible by unconsciousness, and on the condition that the man has had sorrow for his sins prior to the attack that deprived him of his reason. The priest makes the sign of the cross with the holy oil on each of the five senses and in so doing dispenses a sacrament that was instituted by Jesus Christ — a sacrament so powerful that it can completely cleanse the soul of the stains of serious sin.

The priest has it within his competence to send a soul to heaven by disposing that soul for the reception of the last sacraments.

What pagan cruelty is it not for those who proclaim themselves Christians to neglect to call the priest in good time for one of their loved ones who is dying, so that the priest can cleanse the soul and purge the conscience and make clear the path that leads to God! What a cold and lifeless faith that would move a Christian to call a doctor who no longer can help and to forget the priest who alone can help!

This, then, is the first rule for those who, due to ties of blood or

friendship, must take care of the dying. Let their love and kindness inspire them to provide the best that God and man can offer. There is nothing better at the end of life than the ministrations of a priest. The priest can offer the service that Christ Himself would offer if Christ were still on earth, for the priest is the representative of Christ.

Charity Must Not End with Death

WHEN death finally comes charity must not end. The true Christian does not count the cost of sleepless nights, the expenditure of money and the loss of privacy and leisure if honor can be paid to the dead and if comfort can be given to those who mourn the dead. The true Christian does more than weep for the one who died. The true Christian acts.

There are favors that can be done for the dead person for his quick release from the punishment of purgatory. Prayers can be said, the holy Mass can be offered, penances can be performed. All this, on the word of God through His Church, can lessen and even put an end to the pain that possibly is being suffered by the soul, even though the body lies cold and quiet in its coffin.

The Christian who forgets to do these things but rather sits in a corner of the funeral parlor, in deep mourning, and weeps and weeps and will not be consoled, is hardly a Christian at all. One would almost suspect that such a one did not believe in immortality, that such a one was convinced that all was over now and that noth-

ing of assistance could be done except to consign the body to the ground.

Grief is permitted the mourners, of course. Christianity does not deprive the human heart of feeling. But grief is sincere as a proof of love if it is accompanied by charity. Charity suggests a program of help for the one who was so deeply loved upon the instant of that loved one's death — a program of help that continues through the months and years that follow. No letup in tendering this help is permitted until it has been certified that the prize of heaven has been given. That is the way of true and lasting charity.

Respect for the Body

HOWEVER, let it not be supposed that since the soul is the only part of man that continues to live after death (at least this is the arrangement of God until the end of the world) and since only the soul can be helped by the suffrages of those who remain on earth, only the soul should be thought of. Christian charity calls also for loving respect and care for the bodies of the dead.

The body was the temple of the Holy Spirit. The body contained on more than one occasion the substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. The body some day is to be joined with the soul again even as it was on earth before it died, but then in perfection and complete happiness for all eternity. Therefore the body, even when it is dead, should be respected.

In what does charity to the body of the dead consist?

For those who belong to the family of one who died, it consists at least in helping to defray the expenses for the proper and decent preparing of the body and for its honorable burial in ground that has been hallowed and consecrated by the blessing of the Church and by the proximity of the dust of those many other Christian men and women who have died in the Lord and whose remains are mingling with the earth from which originally they came and where they shall remain until the day that God will raise them up and bind them this time everlastingly to their souls.

Not all Christians are willing to use their pocketbook for purposes like this even though the deceased be an immediate member of their family.

There is the story of a woman who lived just a few blocks distant from her sister who was mortally sick. This woman refused even to pay a visit to her dying sister because she feared that if she did, she would be asked by the other members of the family to share in the funeral expenses when death finally came and the obsequies were over and the time had arrived for the settling of the bills.

The well woman was not rich. But the sick woman had nothing. If the family did not bury her, the city or the county would have to do so, giving her no more than a rough box for her body and an unmarked spot in a potter's field for her final resting place.

What a sad commentary on the well woman's Christianity! She was unwilling to contribute even a penny

for the practice of the corporal work of mercy of burying the dead; and that, even though the one to be buried was of her own blood, her sister.

Was she a pagan, an unbeliever, a lax and indifferent Catholic and Christian? Not at all. She went to her Mass on Sunday. She belonged to a number of sodalities and organizations that were set up to accomplish good. She knelt at the railing frequently and took the God of charity into her heart. But for some reason or other, the basic tenet of Christianity — to take care of those who no longer can take care of themselves — never found root in the soil of her soul. She thought that she was a good Christian. In some respects she was. But she was a merciless mourner. In that she was not a good Christian at all.

Opposite Extreme

HERE it might be mentioned that it is not a good practice to go to the opposite extreme and spend almost a fortune in the adornment of the dead body and in marking with elaborate stones and monuments the place where the body lies.

This is very often the practice of pagans who cannot tolerate the thought of a body that has inexorably and until judgment come to an end. They refuse to accept the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. So they fashion an immortality of their own imagination and ingenuity. They beautify the dead bodies of their loved ones as though they were not dead at all. They create an atmosphere of rest and sleep so fantastic

that it seems almost a denial of death and dissolution. They call the room in which the wake takes place a "slumber" room, and they will not use the words "he died." And after the funeral is over, they will spend great sums of money in erecting a splendid monument as a memorial to the one who died.

This is not Christian. A decent care of the honored body of the dead should not cost a fortune. Surely the sum of money spent should not be so great that it impoverishes those who spend it. Even our Lord's body was not extravagantly treated when it was placed in the tomb after the crucifixion on Calvary.

Sometimes it happens that the death of a mother or a father becomes the occasion of the beginning of a terrible feud between the sons and the daughters who survive. This is a scandal for all the world to weep over. Undoubtedly it does great harm to Christ and to His cause upon this earth. Not unseldom so-called Christians are the worst offenders. This is the way it comes about.

One member of the family took care of mother and father for long years when they were old and needed the attention and the assistance of others. Finally mother and father died. When the will was made known, it was discovered that the ones who provided care and made great sacrifices for mother and father received most of the estate while the children who did nothing received only a small share.

Great anger is born in the soul when the news comes out. It grows

with the passage of time. Years pass and the brothers and sisters refuse even to greet each other when they meet on the street. They may receive Holy Communion at the same railing in their parish church. But when they meet face to face after the services are over, they will not so much as exchange the time of day.

It hardly seems possible that hatred and a desire for revenge can arise from the memory of a good mother and an upright father and implant itself in the hearts of Christian sons and daughters. But it is possible and it does happen. God forgive the ones who allow so poisonous a spirit to take them over!

What must mother and father think of their children from the heights of heaven where they are receiving their reward? How they must wish that God would give them the power to return to earth and to take the heads of their children in their hands and knock them together sharply until they rattle and ring like bells in the steeple of a church!

PROBABLY, though, the dead who look down and behold any of the abuses mentioned in this article among their survivors, even though their survivors be immediate members of their family, come to the conclusion that it's good they escaped when they did. And if they were asked whether or not they would like to return to the bosom of their family and resume the old relationships broken off by death, they would shake their heads vigorously and say, "Please, no! May we be preserved!"

THE LAYMAN'S ROLE

You work in a factory. Or an office. Or maybe you're a housewife. Or a mother whose day is taken up with wiping little noses, changing diapers, cooking meals and doing the family washing and ironing.

You may do any of these things. But you're much more than a factory or office worker, a housewife or mother.

You are Christ's hands and feet. You're His representative in the factory, the office, the kitchen. Rather than to be present visibly everywhere Himself, He chooses to depend on you, to let you carry Him into every part of this bleeding and broken world.

He has given you a job which even His chosen ones — His bishops and priests — cannot perform. They cannot go into your factory or office or kitchen and daily make Christ live there. That is your job. Only you can do it.

Voice of St. Jude

WHY SOME CATHOLICS LOSE THEIR FAITH

In the order of importance, these are the six leading reasons why so many Catholics are lost to the faith today:

1. Mixed marriages.
2. Insufficient or no instruction for children in their religion.
3. The Catholic position on divorce and birth-prevention.
4. Lack of churches and priests in rural districts.
5. The example and influence of modern indifference to religion.
6. Calumnies spread about the Church by her enemies.

What are you doing to offset the power of any one of these causes of loss of faith?

For Wives and Husbands Only

Fear of Pregnancy

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

PROBLEM: I have two wonderful children, who are perhaps all the more dear to me because I suffered considerably to have them. I felt miserable much of the time when I was carrying them, and even though there were no great complications in connexion with their birth, I could not help feeling a great sense of relief when it was all over. The youngest is now five years old, and I find that I have a terrible fear of ever having to go through the ordeal of having a child again. My husband knows that I have this awful fear, and that I would prefer anything, even sin, rather than take a chance. Thus I suppose I am guilty of his sins as well as mine. What can I do about it?

SOLUTION: You certainly can think, meditate and pray; you can analyze your fear and face the grounds on which it is based in the light of the fear you should have of God's punishments for the sinner; you can seek help and direction from a good confessor, who will do everything possible to revive your fear of God.

Above all, you should learn to analyze your fear. There are many forms of fear, some normal, some abnormal; some justified and some unjustified; some that must be subordinated to others.

There is, first of all, the normal fear that all human beings feel in the face of danger or distress of any kind. There is nothing abnormal about a wife who has some fear of pregnancy and childbirth, because there is inconvenience and pain connected with these. In good Christian wives this fear is subordinated to two

things: to a much greater fear of committing sin in order to avoid them, and to the instinctive desire to pay the price necessary to be a good wife and to have children of her own.

Secondly, there is the fear of the out-and-out secularist, who has decided that inconvenience and pain in this world are to be avoided at any cost, even at the cost of offending God and deserving hell. Such persons usually blind themselves to the realities of God and heaven and hell; they think only in terms of avoiding all pain.

Thirdly, there is the fear of the neurotic. A neurotic is an adult in years, but a spoiled child in character and outlook. The neurotic is the tragic victim of undiluted self-pity. Everybody and everything in life must be bent or broken to save him or her from pain. The neurotic elevates the slightest reason for fear into a ghastly menace and makes life miserable for everybody in an effort to escape the thing feared.

THE most necessary and fruitful fear of all is the fear of offending God by a serious sin. No one can be a true Christian, no one can hope to enter heaven, without building his life around the fear of losing God forever.

You, as a wife guilty of your own sins and of causing your husband's sins, need to build up your fear of God's punishments to a point where you will gladly face the fear of the normal inconveniences that are a part of your state in life. Without the fear of God and the fear of sin you can have no hope: your soul is doomed.

Let Jesus Bless You!

CHRISTOPHER D. McENNIRY, C.SS.R.

The discussion began because of a picture in a convent parlor; it ended with the best blessing in the world in the convent chapel.

"What? Another drive?"

"Exactly! You know the Sisters of the Good Shepherd must build an addition to their institution or else turn away hundreds of poor girls whom they would gladly assist."

"These drives are becoming a nuisance! Just last month I gave five dollars toward the St. Joseph Orphans' Home drive. And here's another —"

"Let's say you gave a respectable part of one day's wages. Good! You will have a reward in heaven because you contributed part of one day's work to Christ's poor. But you know the good Sisters give three hundred and sixty-five days of service every year for the same cause — no union hours either, mind you. When you reflect on that, don't you feel a little ashamed for raising a fuss because you are asked to make another contribution this month?"

ROBERT Muldoon must have felt a bit ashamed, for he ended by putting his name on the Drive Com-

mittee. That is how he happened to find himself, one hot summer afternoon, with Reverend Father Timothy Casey and other members of the committee, in the reception room of the convent of the Good Shepherd.

Robert was a good man, and the peace and quiet and hallowed surroundings of the large convent reception room appealed to all that was best in him. The time spent in awaiting the arrival of a tardy member of the committee did not hang heavy on his hands. He had made an inventory of the room and was now standing before a rich painting — a present to the Sisters from a benefactor in France. It showed "Christ Blessing the Little Children." So deeply was he impressed by the lifelike representation that only after some minutes did he notice Father Casey standing beside him.

"A striking picture," observed the priest.

"I never saw the like of it in my life," answered Muldoon enthusiastically. "I could stand here looking at it for an hour. It does me more good than a sermon."

"You forget the restful sleep you get during a sermon," said the priest, laughing.

"Come on, Father Tim, will you never stop harping on that one time that you saw me nodding?"

"Robert," said the priest, growing serious again, "does it make you feel that you would be glad to have the kind and gentle Jesus bless your own little ones?"

"I'd gladly give all that I have, Father Tim, for such a privilege."

"You would give all that you have! Robert Muldoon, you are a great hand with your jokes."

"Jokes, is it? Why I never was more serious in my life."

"Surely you're joking. You don't mean what you say."

"God forgive you, Father Tim! I'm telling you I mean it."

"I don't mind your *telling*; I mind your *doing*. Didn't you yourself bring your children to the movies last Sunday night during benediction?"

"I did that. It was a clean decent picture, and they were after me to go. The little rascals are crazy about movies. Why when I was their age I thought it was heaven to see a circus once a year. But what has that to do with the question?"

"Robert, what is the Blessed Sacrament?"

"It's our Lord Himself, of course," replied Muldoon.

"Our Lord really and truly — just as He is represented in that picture, for instance?"

"Just the same. Sure, isn't that what we were always taught?"

"And benediction," continued the priest, "is blessing. What, therefore, is benediction of the Blessed Sacrament?"

"It is — why, it is our Lord Himself blessing us."

"Just the same as when He blessed the children as shown there in that picture?"

"Why — yes — I suppose it is just the same."

"Precisely!" cried Father Casey.

"But look here: it was announced that there would be benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in St. Mary's Sunday evening at seven-thirty. In other words, that at seven-thirty Sunday evening in St. Mary's our divine Saviour Himself would bless all those who cared enough to come there and receive His blessing. And you — instead of bringing your little ones to church to receive that blessing — you took them to the picture show. That is why I cannot bring myself to believe that you are in earnest when you say that you would give everything you possess to have our Saviour bless your children."

Robert Muldoon had never before been known to stall at an answer. For once he was speechless. After a moment's silence, the priest continued:

"I have long reflected on a puzzle. I am going to propose it to you. I think you ought to be able to answer it."

Muldoon heaved a sigh of relief, thinking that the disconcerting subject of missing benediction had been dropped at last.

"I'm an indifferent hand at solving puzzles, Father Tim," he said modestly — meaning of course: "You'll find me as ready a wit as the next one."

"What puzzles me," began the priest, "is the mental process through

which a great number of my parishioners pass. You are one of the number. That is why I think you ought to be able to solve my riddle."

"Yes, Father Tim?" Muldoon wondered what was coming.

"It's this matter of missing benediction. (Oh, brother! Here was the same subject coming up again!) The total attendance at all the Masses in St. Mary's of a Sunday morning is about two thousand. Now, how many are there at benediction on Sunday evening?"

"I suppose, Father Tim, there'd be — I'd say — about . . ."

"Look here, Robert," said the priest, "how can you attempt to answer that question? Are you ever at benediction yourself?"

"I missed only once during Lent," replied Muldoon.

"Oh, that was something special. I suppose you were there, too, for the Forty Hours. But I mean when there was nothing special going on — just ordinary Sunday evening benediction. How many times did you attend during the last twelve months?"

"Why, to be honest with you, Father Tim, I wasn't there once."

"I know you weren't. Therefore you cannot say how many attend. I will tell you. Out of the two thousand who come to Mass Sunday morning, not more than eighty or ninety return for benediction in the evening. Now, what is the reason for this? That is the puzzle I want solved."

"I guess, Father Tim, it's because it is a mortal sin to miss Mass, and it is no sin at all to miss benediction."

"So," said the priest, "the reason why our good Catholics do not come to church to receive our Saviour's blessing, is that He does not drive them there under pain of sin — is that it?"

"I suppose it is," replied Muldoon lamely.

"Take another look at that picture," continued the priest. "In the background you see a little stone cottage with smoke curling up from the chimney. It shows that the good housewife has been preparing the evening meal. Do you suppose that this Jewish woman called her children in to supper and said: 'We won't bother about going out to get the blessing of Jesus because it's no sin to miss it?' Do you think she did that?"

"I hardly think she did," answered Muldoon.

"Nor I either," returned the priest. "We condemn the Jews and talk as though we had a monopoly on devotion toward the Saviour, and yet did these Jewish women not prize His blessing more than four-fifths of the Christian parents in this parish?"

"Maybe," argued Muldoon, "because that was the only time Jesus was in those parts to give them His blessing, but He is with us all the time."

"And because He is so much more generous toward us than He was toward the Jews, is that a valid reason why we should be less grateful than they were?"

"No, I guess not," said Muldoon.

"By the way, Robert, you knew Jim O'Brien that used to live in the

little house down by the railroad tracks?"

"I did, Father Tim. And a finer man never walked the earth."

"Night after night, as long as he lived, every one of his children came and knelt before him to receive his blessing before going to bed. It was a beautiful sight. I was present and saw him do it the very night that he died. He was a true father, and they were dutiful children. But to come to the point. What do you suppose he wished his children every time he blessed them?"

"I am sure he wished them everything good for soul and body."

"Why?"

"Because he loved them."

"Did he see that his good wishes came true?"

"As far as lay in his power, he did. But many a good thing he could only wish for them and trust God would give it."

"Jim O'Brien blessing his children," said the priest, "gives us some idea of the meaning of Christ bestowing His evening blessing upon us in the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Jim wished his children every good because he loved them. Our divine Saviour loves each one of us a million times more than any earthly father could ever love his children. When therefore we kneel before the altar and the priest lifts high above our heads the golden monstrance containing the consecrated Host, and Jesus Christ, our divine Friend and loving Redeemer, looks down on us with His tender pitying eyes, and blesses each one of us, what good

thing is there on earth or in heaven that He does not wish us?

"Jim O'Brien wished good things to his children, but he had not the power to give them the best that he wished. He who blesses us in the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is the all-powerful God, the omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth. Whatever He wishes us, He will actually give unless we close our hands and hearts to His benefits — unless we foolishly exchange the treasures of God for the cheap toys and trinkets of the world. And our good Catholics say: It's no sin to miss benediction! Let's go to the movies."

JUST then Sister Theofila entered with a shining tray. On the tray were six dainty, hand-worked doilies — two large and four small. On the four small ones were tumblers and on the two large ones a plate of cake and a pitcher of lemonade. The four sweltering men thought they had never heard such heavenly music as the clinking of the ice against the side of the pitcher as Sister poured the cooling beverage. How do the good nuns know so well that men are always hungry and thirsty?

"After the committee meeting," Sister said, "Father Casey has promised to give benediction in our chapel. Would you gentlemen care to attend?"

"Delighted!" they cried in unison. And none more enthusiastically than Robert Muldoon.

* * *

No person will have occasion to complain of the want of time who never loses any.

pre-marriage clinic

Marriage or College?

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

PROBLEM: I am eighteen years old and have just finished high school. All through my high school years I had planned to go on with my education, and my parents have arranged for my enrollment in a girls' Catholic college. Now I find that I have fallen in love with a Catholic boy, also just finished with high school. We have talked about getting married, but I have also told him of my strong desire to have a college education. Could we not consider ourselves engaged, and both go on for a higher education, thus waiting four years before we get married?

SOLUTION: It looks simple enough, and the plan of which you speak would seem to assure you of everything you desire — both a college education and a husband. But a realistic outlook, combined with the principles governing courtship and company-keeping, makes it necessary to raise some serious objections to your plan.

FACT No. 1: Long engagements (and surely a four-year engagement is exceedingly long) are a most frequent and common cause of falls into sins of impurity. So few individuals escape the application of this fact, that unnecessarily prolonged engagements are wrong. Engagement brings thoughts of marriage; it tends to lead to more and more intense love-making; intense love-making leads right into sin. Even in a reasonably short engagement couples have to take special precautions against falling into sin. The long-

er the engagement, the more difficult it is to take adequate precautions.

FACT No. 2: Usually there is not too much value in a college education that is sought by one who is engaged, especially if there are frequent opportunities for meetings and dates with the fiancé. It requires heroism of a rare sort to banish distractions and settle down to worthwhile study under such circumstances. Often it turns out to be a waste of the parents' money, who have to pay for such an education.

In view of these facts we have to recommend that you make a choice between the two things you desire. If you are absolutely determined to go through college, do not become engaged beforehand. Do not make any promise to marry a certain man after your college course, and do not agree to reserve all your dates exclusively for one individual. Enter college then, unencumbered by any commitments.

IF, on the other hand, you are so deeply in love that it is already difficult for you to avoid excessive love-making and therefore sin, and if all other circumstances make the prospect of marriage a prudent one then you had better give up your dream of college and plan on getting married within a reasonable time. Once company-keeping and love have led to serious talk and plans for marriage, then marriage should follow within a reasonable time. Otherwise you court only spiritual disaster.

SIDEGLANCES

By the Bystander

Quibbles against
Catholic Schools

AT this time of year Catholic parents all over the land are making, or have already made, the decision as to where their children will go to school in September. In the majority of cases the decision is a simple one to make, and the parents make it without dwelling for a moment on any alternative possibility. There is a *Catholic* grade school, high school, college or university available to their children. They know that the universal law of the Church is that they send their children to Catholic schools unless they have a serious reason for doing otherwise and the permission of their bishop or pastor for so doing. They know that this law is merely a positive application of the natural law which commands parents to use all available means to insure the thoroughly religious and Catholic upbringing of their children. They may be aware that the facilities of the Catholic school or college suffer by comparison with those of the publicly supported and privately endowed secular institutions that are available to them. They do not take the untenable position that there are no weaknesses or imperfections in the Catholic educational system or

any of its local representatives. But they put first things first: barring an unusual circumstance or reason for asking an exemption for their children, they follow the dictates of their Catholic conscience and obey the authority of the Church by enrolling their children in the Catholic school or college that is conveniently at hand. These parents simply think and act with the Church that Christ set up to guide them and their children to heaven.

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WHILE this description describes the attitude of most Catholics, there are always those who resort to quibbling reasons for not doing the right thing for their children. We are not speaking of those who have solid and serious reasons for not enrolling their children in a Catholic school. Such reasons would be the lack of a Catholic grade school or high school within the accessible area of the home; or a child's need of special treatment, unavailable in the Catholic school, by reason of defect of hearing or speech or mind. Among what we call quibbling reasons there are five that are most frequently used, sometimes singly, sometimes in various

combinations. All of them are heard from the lips of various Catholic parents who do not send their children to Catholic grade or high schools; some of them are used as a reason for denying a Catholic college or university education to their children.

THE first quibbling objection to childrens' attendance at the local Catholic grade or high school is that of *distance*. There is a point at which distance becomes a valid ground for excuse from the law, as when the distance of the home from the school is such as to make attendance gravely inconvenient or extravagantly expensive. But too often an objection is made out of the mere fact that it is more convenient and easy for the child to get to the public school than the Catholic. Thus parents sometimes say: "The Catholic school is half a mile or a mile away; the public school is only two blocks away; surely we have a right to use the convenience of the latter." This is surely stretching the meaning of convenience beyond all proportion to the gains and losses involved. With the growing use of buses by Catholic schools, in many cases the argument has no valid weight at all. But even where the children have to walk a mile or so, it can hardly be said that, to save them that mile, it is worthwhile to deprive them of a Catholic education. Surely in doubtful cases, this is something for the pastor or bishop to pass judgment on.

THE second quibble is that of *cost*. This is the saddest argument to be heard, because it is presented in the face of the heroic generosity of the majority of Catholics in building and maintaining Catholic schools even under the handicap of paying, with their taxes, for the public schools as well. Yet some Catholics, usually those who do less than their share and less than their means would permit in supporting their parish in any way, raise the argument of cost. They resent every incidental expense connected with their children's Catholic education; every mention of money made to the children in behalf of the missions or some parish activity or any other good cause. Such parents count the goods of life in terms of money alone; their children, alas, will grow up to do the same. They will never learn that there are some things in life that cannot be priced in terms of money; that the pearl of greatest value is the knowledge and love of God, for which any man should be willing, like the man in our Lord's parable, to sell everything that this he might buy.

THE third quibble is that of *the lesser material conveniences of the Catholic school compared to the public*. This expresses itself in different ways. One way is this: "The Catholic school is crowded; it has 60 or 70 children to a classroom; the public school has only 40 to a classroom. Therefore I have a reason for sending

my child to the latter." The reason is a good one only if the child involved is subnormal or abnormal in some way, needing extra attention that can be given only in an uncrowded secular school. The normal child, whose parents work with the school in supervising its education, will not suffer greatly from being taught together with 60 fellow pupils rather than with 40. Whatever handicap does result from such a situation is vastly offset by the fact that it is given a rounded education, one that is designed to prepare it for heaven as well as for proper adjustment to the present world. The same answer must be given to those Catholic parents who are carried away by the newness, the architectural beauty, the multiple facilities of their local public school into rejecting an opportunity to send their children to a Catholic school. The gains are so ephemeral and passing; the loss may be the loss of a soul.

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THE fourth quibble, quite often heard these days, is the argument that children need to learn tolerance, and that they can learn it only in a school where children of many faiths and of no faith are thrown together. Parents who use this argument fail to realize that children are usually not capable of making the essential distinction between tolerance of persons who are in error, and tolerance of error or untruth itself. By Christ's law of charity

we are all bound to practice tolerance (no grudging tolerance, but explicit good will) toward those whom we know to be in sin or error. By the law of nature imposed on every human intellect, we must be intolerant of human error, in the sense that we may never speak or act as if what we know to be untrue were true. Children are by nature tolerant of people, no matter what their beliefs or practices; what they need to learn most for their salvation is the objective and unchangeable truth about their nature and destiny made known through reason and the revelations of God. Deprive them of a chance to learn this latter by sending them to a school in which the teaching of religion has no place, and far more often than not they will end up in the ranks of the legion who say: "All religions are equally good; no religion is supremely important."

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THE fifth quibble is that of those who take the position that Catholic educational standards and methods are so inferior to those of other schools that it would be an injustice to deprive their children of the latter. This argument is strengthened in some minds by the self-criticism of some Catholic educators and leaders in recent times. It is stiffened too, in some, by the fact that some Catholics, in high places or low, refuse to admit, or to tolerate any mention of, mistakes or imperfections in the Catholic educational system.

Perhaps, nothing is more fatuous and unprofitable, however, than making comparisons of Catholic and non-Catholic educational methods in universal terms. It is the individual case that matters, so far as the mechanics of education are concerned. But there is an essential difference for Catholics: the Catholic system includes orientation of the pupil toward God; the public system does not. For the true Catholic this is essential and supremely important. He does not have to be told that a grave reason is necessary for acting as if that difference were not there. He knows there is often room for constructive and charitable criticism of Catholic methods or facilities or standards of education in a certain area. But he never makes such criticism a ground for declaring that his children will be better off without a religious schooling.

THE sad thing is that there are so many good Catholic parents who would never resort to quibbling reasons for refusing their children a Catholic schooling, but who have no choice in the matter. Perhaps they have recently moved into a fast-growing Catholic parish, and the school there is already filled. Perhaps the father's work has forced him to move to a small town in which there is no Catholic school. Such parents will do everything possible to offset the disadvantage their children must suffer by their own instructions and by insisting on

the children's regular attendance at catechism classes that are held for them. Meanwhile they use as much influence as they possess to promote among their fellow Catholics and priests, the enlargement or erection of an adequate Catholic school, counting no sacrifice too great to achieve this end.

GOD'S MEASURING STICKS

Let us not be fooled by the world's measuring sticks; God does not choose His servants according to an IQ test. His requirements are of a different sort, and they are not inherent; we have to work at them.

What does God expect?

First of all, gentleness and kindness — the gentleness and kindness that grow out of understanding and tolerance, out of compassion, out of concern for other people.

Second, God expects honesty and sincerity — the complete honesty and sincerity that grow out of understanding ourselves, admitting our limitations and using what talents we have been given for the benefit of mankind and the glory of God.

Third, God expects unselfishness and love — the outward-flowing desire to share, to give, to help; the love that gives value to everything in God's world and reflects God's own attitudes toward His people.

Finally, God expects courage — the courage that makes one stand up for what is right no matter who scoffs; the courage to follow God's plan even though one is persecuted for one's beliefs.

These are the ideals of nobility of character. These are God's measuring sticks.

Franciscan Message

? ? ? ? ? ? Readers Ask...

Catholic and Protestant Bibles

Louis G. Miller, C.S.S.R.

What is meant when writers refer to different "versions of the Bible?"

When we speak of different versions of the Bible we ordinarily mean different translations. The Bible was originally written in Hebrew and Greek. In the fourth century the great Scripture scholar, St. Jerome, worked out the official Latin translation called the Vulgate. Latin was the language used throughout western Christendom at that time. Then, as centuries went on and new languages came into being, translations into these new languages were undertaken. For example, there were nine translations into German before the time of Luther. In all of these different translations approved by the Church, the sense, of course, remained the same, but the actual words used and the construction of phrases varied quite widely.

What are the chief English Catholic versions in common use today?

The following three are most commonly used in this country:

1. The Douay-Rheims version, first published in the year 1609. It received its title from the names of two towns on the French coast where scholars, in exile from persecution in England, worked out the translation.

2. The Confraternity revision, edited by Scripture scholars in the United States under the sponsorship of the national Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. The New Testament appeared in 1941. Only part of the Old Testament has been published, but the work is continuing.

3. The Knox translation of the entire Bible, authorized by the Catholic hierarchy of England, and brought to completion a few years ago by the British scholar and stylist, Monsignor Ronald A. Knox.

How do Catholic versions of the Bible differ from Protestant ones?

1. Catholic Bibles always have an *Imprimatur*, which means that a bishop has approved the particular version or translation involved.

2. The Catholic Old Testament has seven more books than the Protestant version. They are Judith, Tobias, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, Baruch, and I and II Machabees. It also has a few extra chapters in the books of Esther and Daniel. For centuries these had been universally accepted and officially declared by the Church to be part of the inspired word. But Luther, for some reason rejected them, and later Protestant versions have all followed his example.

3. The names of a few of the books are different, and there are variations in the names of persons and places.

4. Bibles are usually published with explanatory footnotes and commentaries. Protestant Bibles naturally use these explanations to defend their deviations from Catholic teaching and sometimes quite openly to attack Catholic beliefs.

Is it wrong for Catholics to read Protestant versions of the Bible?

Yes. If they are average Catholics, of ordinary education, such reading would be for them only a source of confusion

letter to the Romans St. Paul outlines no less than twenty-six moral maladies that were corroding the heart of the world. And he ends this passage with the terrifying note that the people of that time were "hateful to God, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy . . ." All because women were considered chattels and tools of convenience.

Then comes St. Luke. He begins his Gospel by saying: "I . . . have determined, after following up all things carefully from the very first, to write . . . an orderly account, that you may understand the certainty of the words in which you have been instructed . . ." The theme that runs through the whole Gospel of St. Luke is that all men and women are to be saved. From now on women are to take the position of dignity that God gave them. In fact, through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they are to receive a new dignity, such as the ancient world had refused to give them. Because women, the world over, are sensitive and delicate, St. Luke displays these two qualities when pointing out the place they are to take in the economy of the New Testament.

THE MOTHER OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

TAKE the example of St. Elizabeth, the mother of St. John the Baptist. She was an old woman, one who would have been considered useless in the progressive pagan world. Jewish women at that time considered it a reproach to be without a child. They were looked upon with shame for an event over which they had no

physical control. But when Elizabeth was to have a child in her old age, St. Luke writes about this boldly. He puts the words of the news in the mouth of an angel talking to Elizabeth's cousin: "and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month; for nothing is impossible with God . . ."

During her pregnancy Elizabeth went in hiding. Why? Certainly not for shame because she herself had said: "Thus has the Lord dealt with me in the days when he deigned to take away my reproach among men." A woman as old as Elizabeth naturally knew that the neighbors would talk at this sudden turn of events in the life of Zachary and herself. This would be a conversation piece for a long time to come. But more than that, the conception of St. John in the womb of an old woman held the aura of a divine secret, at least in the mind of Elizabeth. And Mary, her cousin, was the first to share it.

THE WOMAN NAMED ANNA

ANOTHER stroke in favor of a woman's dignity is St. Luke's mention of the prophetess, Anna, who, together with the old man Simeon, welcomed the presentation of the Child Jesus in the temple. Her father was Phanuel; she came from the tribe of Aser. To offset the pagan attitude toward women, St. Luke shows that she was a woman of deep, personal piety. She represented a class of people who waited in hope and holy fear the coming of the Messias. She fasted, she prayed, she worshipped, says St. Luke, night and day. The only delicacy he might have in-

fringed upon was the fact that he mentions her age! She lived "by herself as a widow to 84 years." Even while she was giving praise to the Lord by her life, St. Luke points out a womanly trait which is appreciated: "She spoke of Him to all who were awaiting the redemption of Israel." She was not too quiet; which, according to the traditions of centuries, is about par for the course.

THE SINFUL WOMAN

ST. Luke was not blind to the fact that there were sinful women in the world. But even for them there was hope of salvation. He brings this out in his tender treatise of the sinful woman of the Gospel.

He does not mention her name which is "in harmony with his delicate reserve." Her life had been a reckless one, running from one sin to another. It was common knowledge that she had been a harlot. No doubt she had listened to a sermon or instruction given by Jesus Christ Himself. Otherwise she would not have come to Him as she did. "When they had heard Him, *all the people* and the publicans justified God." She recognized Jesus for what He was: God's messenger for her salvation.

Our Lord was in the house of a Pharisee when the sinful woman appeared. It was an ordinary thing at that time to anoint the *head* of an esteemed person. But this woman presumes to anoint Christ's *feet*. For this Christ treated her with respect and dignity: "Wherefore I say to you, her many sins have been forgiven be-

cause she shows clear signs that she has loved much."

Such an attitude did not sit well with Simon, the Pharisee, who had invited our Lord to his house. Simon had treated the woman contemptuously, as though she were irrevocably cut off from God forever. This recalled the time our Lord spoke a parable to people like Simon "who trusted in themselves as being just and despised others . . ." But now it was time for Christ to point his finger directly at Simon. It is true, the woman was a sinner. But no matter how many sins she committed she could still reach out for the reward of heaven. In less than five minutes she could turn from the lustful love of the body to the love of God. The conclusion is a stinging one that could be lost in the overall picture. But Jesus pointed out clearly to Simon that, if judging from her behaviour, God had forgiven this woman, then Simon could conclude from his own behaviour that God had *not* forgiven him.

Simon pleaded that Jesus must have been ignorant of what kind of woman this was! But Christ quietly replies that he knows a great deal about her. He knew her so well that he could say with divine truth that even her sins had been taken away. To the woman he said: "Thy faith has saved thee; go in peace." This one sentence sums up the whole theme that runs through the Gospel of St. Luke like a golden thread: God is now on earth in the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is visiting His creatures to save them. Women

are as great a part of that salvation as any man. . . .

IN THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL

MORE than this, women were even to take an active part in the spread of Christianity. This holds true now as it did in the time of Christ. For a verification of this all we have to do is point with pride to the legion of Catholic sisters who have cut themselves off from the outside world in an effort to bring the truths of Christ to children in the classroom, to the agonizing in hospitals and leper colonies, to the pagans in and out of our country.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ introduced, in this regard, a great change in the Christian outlook, owing to the new attitude toward continence. Christ's own purity and that of His mother was undoubtedly attractive. Christ recommended continence to those who would and could take it.

It can easily be understood how Christians would be marked off as a rather odd lot because of this new idea. On the pagans it would have a shattering effect; and they, no doubt, would be interested in the opinions of the wise men of the time, the equivalent of our psychiatrists. The fact that Christ recommended continence created a new problem among Christians themselves.

Men — like Peter and James and John — would naturally be chosen as leaders in the work of Christ. In time many of these helpers, like the apostles, would enter the ranks of Christianity as deacons and priests. But at

first, there did not seem to be much for younger or even older ladies to do. "Many would become restless; and there was always the tendency that they might wish to assert themselves at the meetings of the Church." For this reason St. Paul admonished them: "Let women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted them to speak, but let them be submissive, as the law also says. But if they wish to learn anything let them ask their husbands at home, for it is unseemly for a woman to speak in church."

Again: "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. For I do not allow a woman to teach, or to exercise authority over men; but she is to keep quiet . . ." And as we mentioned before, St. Paul even deigned to tread on the ever-dangerous ground of telling them how to dress: "But every woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered disgraces her head." Then suddenly, as if he knew what he was getting into, he quickly adds: "But if anyone is disposed to be contentious — we have no such custom, neither have the churches of God . . ."

As though he wanted to soften the tone of St. Paul, with whom he was closely associated in life, St. Luke devotes a brief description to the women who helped our Lord and the disciples in one of their preliminary missionary journeys. He mentions by name Joanna, the wife of one of Herod's stewards; and Mary Magdalene, and Susanna. He gives a brief insight into the reason for their devo-

tion: "And with Him were the twelve, and certain women *who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities.*" He also mentions kindly that they "used to provide for them out of their means."

IN THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

BUT it is in the last moments of Christ's life that women come to the fore and show the true role of mercy and kindness that is proper to them. The Talmud tells us that one of the cares of certain pious women was to provide spiced wine for dying criminals. The wine the soldiers gave our Lord to drink might well have been first prepared by just such a group of women.

It is to be remembered that according to tradition our Lord stopped on His way to Calvary and spoke with His mother. The only other time He spoke to anyone was when He spoke to the women of Jerusalem: the same ones, supposedly, who took care of Him in His last needs.

What He said to them is of special value. Previously He had made the statement, "Woe to those who are with child, or have infants at the breast in those days . . ." He was speaking then about the destruction of Jerusalem and the terrifying days that lay ahead. Now, on His way to Calvary, His statement to the women is strongly reminiscent of the same thought: "Do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and your children. For behold, days are coming in which men will say: 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never

bore, and breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if in the case of the green wood they do these things, what is to happen in the case of the dry?"

Picture a person enkindling a fire with green and damp wood instead of dry sticks. The application to the present circumstances of Christ's own death and crucifixion is clear. If the divine justice, to all appearances, is now about to fall on those who are just (like these good ladies), then how terrifying will it be when the divine justice is to fall on the guilty? St. Peter echoed the same idea years later in one of his letters: "For the time has come for the judgment to begin with the household of God; but if it begin first, with us, what will be the end of those who do not believe in the Gospel of God? And if the just man scarcely will be saved, where will the impious and sinner appear?"

MARTHA AND MARY

POSSIBLY one of the greatest boosts for the dignity of women is given by St. Luke in his touching story of Martha and Mary at Bethany. The scene, it must be remembered, indicates a situation that is friendly and familiar. The plain, literal meaning of the circumstances would point to the fact that Jesus came to the house of Mary and Martha as an *unexpected guest*. It may be supposed also that His disciples came with Him. Even one unexpected guest would be enough to send a woman scurrying to the kitchen to prepare a meal. That is what Martha did. But

Mary became absorbed in the words of Jesus.

It would be wrong to suppose that Martha was complaining when she said: "Lord, is it no concern of thine that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her therefore to help me . . ." Likewise it would be false to interpret Christ's answer as a rebuke. He said: "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; and yet only one thing is necessary." The repetition of her name lends an affectionate tone to the whole scene. Then, too, it would be brash to suppose that Christ, who was kindness itself, would rebuke a woman who was busying herself for Him and His friends. Any guest would be prompted to forestall a lot of bother. A little something to eat would be enough. Don't bother with a lot of fancy preparations. Then He added with a faint hint of humor: "Mary has chosen the best part, and it will not be taken from her . . ." She should not be deprived of the part she has chosen just so she can help with all these preparations which are really unnecessary.

This passage has always been the classic for the balance to be maintained between the spiritual and material works in the life of a busy woman. A housewife, for instance, is not expected to be on her knees in prayer all the time. It is also necessary for a happy home that she get on her knees occasionally to dust and clean the baseboard of the living-room or kitchen. Previous to the coming of Christ, a woman was to bear her children and work. Whether

she had a soul or not could be argued back and forth by men over a cup of wine. So for that reason she should be content to stay in the background of society.

But now women, it was made clear, have as much dignity as men. They were to emerge from the shadows of paganism and play their own individual and collective role in the salvation of all mankind. . . . It is interesting to note that up until 1950 the incident of Martha and Mary was used in the Mass for the Gospel of the feast of the Assumption. It pointed out with clarity that our Blessed Lady, the queen of all women, in carrying out her role as the mother of Jesus, played the part of Martha, just as any housewife must do. She played also the part of Mary of Bethany in that a certain amount of prayer must be blended into a woman's busy day.

It would be well to note that in regard to her spiritual life, the mother of Jesus was not a church-going quidnunc. She did not wear her religion for everyone to see. She considered herself a maid in the household of God. And rather than talk about her accomplishments in the spiritual life, or how good she was, or how much work she did, she "kept all these things in her heart . . ."

It is frequently, but erroneously, said that it is a man's world. To prove this, the untutored will often misquote the Holy Bible. The true dignity of a Christian woman is unfolded quietly in the pages of St. Luke's gospel. He has defended them with a literary art unexcelled in the history of the world.



readers retort

In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

Social Gatherings for Catholics

"I am in complete sympathy with the writer of the letter about social gatherings for Catholics. There is only one parish in Chicago that caters to Catholics over twenty-five years old. This parish is on the south side and quite distant from my home. If there are any others I would like to know about them. I am twenty-seven years old, and I find it very difficult to meet good Catholic fellows. Girls of my age have to resort to dance-halls. I hate to do this because it makes me feel cheap; but is there any alternative in finding companionship? Our parish has a club, but the ages range from seventeen to twenty-five with the majority about twenty-two. If there is an answer please let me know.

Chicago, Ill.

N. N"

"I don't think it is 'too sweeping a statement' to say that the Catholic Church is doing nothing to meet the situation described in a letter in the April issue by a 39-year-old woman who wanted Catholic friends. I became a convert in my late twenties after years of social fellowship within Protestant churches. Suddenly when I became a Catholic, I had no friends my age at all. As the other woman pointed out, there are NO provisions made or even thought of for unmarried Catholics in their thirties. I tried hard to get a discussion

group started — but I got nowhere with the priests in my parish. I know — they are terribly busy and I was a newcomer, a stranger. But there is a real problem here. Sunday after Sunday I could see both men and women of my age in the congregation, apparently alone, and possibly even lonely. But because we had no authorized way of meeting each other, we went our ways through another week. My search for a social group during eight years extended over several parishes in three cities. I'll be surprised if you find ONE that has done anything.

San Diego, Calif.

R. S."

"I am inclined to agree with the writer of the letter on social gatherings for Catholics. I am 36 and have been in the Washington, D. C. area for some years, during which time I was a member of half a dozen different parishes. In all that time I have not found, nor even heard of, a club for older unmarried Catholic people. Needless to say, I am still unmarried. I am not one to complain without offering a suggestion in return. First of all I suppose that the reason for the lack of clubs for older people is that the number of unmarried people in any parish is small and the parish finds it impracticable to form such a club. I suggest that all the Catholic parishes in a given area should get together in a common purpose and organize a club

for the older unmarried people of all the parishes. Certainly ten to fifty parishes in a small or large city could find the organizers and the funds needed to inaugurate and sustain such a club. If need be, a membership fee can be charged each member. I am sure most of us older people can afford it and would be happy to make the contribution. The writer of the letter in the April issue stated that she is not desperate about marriage. No one may be desperate from the emotional standpoint; but I believe that many are desperate from the spiritual point of view, and if something is not done for them they go from bad to worse or from good to bad. It is not enough for the Church to remind her members of the ten commandments. Help is also needed.

Washington, D. C.

N. N."

"To my knowledge there are in my city only two clubs where one may meet new friends. But even these are not parish clubs where one feels more at home. One of these clubs is the Catholic Young Adults Club which is no more than a year or so old. This club, of which I am a member, is for unmarried Catholics over eighteen. I will be practical enough to admit, however, that to start or organize social groups in each parish will bring problems and disappointments to the organizers. But I believe also that the Church has a definite responsibility to provide for us, thus eliminating occasions of sin in our lives.

Syracuse, N. Y.

N. N."

"In the April issue I saw the letter about social gatherings for Catholics. I believe our club has an answer for the writer of the letter and for others like her. In 1955 I started working up the idea for such a club as she inquires about. We have members scattered in various states. In October of 1956 we proceeded to organize a group here in Chicago. We now have about 160

members. From its membership we are forming a national body to assist in organizing other groups in various cities and areas. We know this will take quite some time. Until such groups are formed locally, the people joining us have the opportunity of meeting with us on week ends and vacations. We know, too, that many people live in areas where there are not enough people to form a group, but as members of our organization they will be able to meet with us on the week end and on vacation travels. The Very Reverend John C. Phillips, C.S.S.R., pastor of St. Michael's Church, 1633 N. Cleveland Avenue, Chicago 14, Illinois, is our sponsor. Anyone may write to him for more information. Any requests for further information will be gladly answered. There is a great need for an organization of this type, and I hope and pray that you may find our club one you can recommend to your readers.

Chicago, Ill.

B. B."

• *This last letter was sent to us by the founder of the club she writes about. It is called ACTS, which is derived from the words ACE, meaning single, CATHOLIC, denoting our religion, TRAVELING, which is part of the social program in the form of vacationing together and SOCI-ETAL, a means of gaining social contact. This club was formed for the purpose of offering a social organization for adult Catholics — single, widow or widower — ages 31 to 50. We must admit that the letters we received on this question give strong evidence that there is room for much effort in the way of organizing Catholic groups or clubs for social gatherings of adult Catholics. As the writer of one of the above letters points out, one of the difficulties to be overcome is the fact that single persons in a parish who are seeking social contacts in this manner are not too numerous. That is why we believe that an organization like ACTS described in the last letter may be more easily organized*

and probably will be more successful than the parish group.

The editors

Retarded Children

"Your article *For Parents of Retarded Children* is a priceless one. Your article has given me the belief that God must have loved us very much to chose us to be the parents of two children that required special care. I wish I could have read the article years ago when my sorrows began. If it is possible I would like copies of the article to give to my pediatrician so he can give it to parents of other retarded children; to read to members of my mental health group; to read to members of Recovery, Inc., of which my husband and I are new members; to give to parents of other retarded children whom I know. Midland, Mich. Mrs. R. K."

"My wife and I want to thank you for the great article about the retarded child. Our own retarded child has brought all of us nearer to God. She was raised by the Sisters of St. Vincent, and my regret is that I did not study the Catholic faith at that time instead of waiting. But I think I still have time to make up and express our gratitude. So please thank the author of the article for giving the spiritual viewpoint which Catholics should have of this difficult, joyful, sorrowful and glorious revelation of the love of God for us. Monrovia, Calif. H. N."

• *We received many more letters expressing gratitude for the article on retarded children. A number of these letters asked the question: "Shall we send our child to a school for retarded children or place our child in an institution for retarded children?" We hope to publish another article on this subject (perhaps several) by Father Breitenbeck. Eventually, we hope, these articles will be published singly as pamphlets or in collected booklet form.*

The editors

How Fortunate I Was!

"When I learned that I was going to have my eighth child I was very despondent and bitter, feeling that it wasn't fair, because my children are all less than two years apart. However, that same day, by accident or by the grace of God, I happened to read of two lepers who fell in love and got married in a leper colony. When their babies were born they were promptly taken from the parents to avoid infection. I realized then how fortunate I really was as I know my heart would break if any baby of mine were taken from me. Now, whenever I temporarily feel sorry for myself, I try to recall the poor lepers' life and I am deeply ashamed of myself.

Los Angeles, Calif.

Mrs. V. F."

Impediment of Affinity

"Recently we read a booklet on problems of courtship and marriage and now we have a question. The booklet stated, 'Affinity, that is, relationship through marriage to the second degree inclusive, is a diriment impediment to marriage. Thus on the death of his wife a man cannot, without a dispensation, marry his deceased wife's sister, aunt, niece or first cousin.' We are wondering what the reason is for this. My husband does not understand why this might be and, frankly, neither do I. Perhaps you could explain this for us. Gladwin, Mich. N. N."

• *The impediment called "affinity" is based on the same general principle of the natural law that underlies the impediment of blood relationship, namely, that the family circle, with its more or less intimate social relationships, should exclude the idea of marriage so as to lessen the dangers of concupiscence and temptation among those who see each other often and in close domestic relationships. Thus the law of nature puts a special sign of "untouchable" on the sisters of a man's wife and other close relatives, even though he*

sees them often and may even live beneath the same roof with them. Thus, too, family social life is meant to be free and pleasant and happy, without overtones or undertones of sinful desire. In the case of affinity, of course, a dispensation can be granted after the death of one of the spouses. But the fact of the impediment serves a wonderful purpose in society.

The editors

Teen-agers and Religion

"I have just finished reading the article on teen-agers and religion in the April issue. It is so true and concise that it actually hit me right between the eyes — only a few years too late. As a young married woman — after seven months of married life — it seems like only yesterday that I was one of those teen-agers to whom you refer in your article. Religion was for sissies! Real sharp gals didn't go to Holy Communion. They got all decked out and went to the last Mass on Sunday. What I am trying to say is that if (God willing) my husband and I have a family, they will never have the memories that I have of my teen-age years. In my opinion, as far as my life now and in the future is concerned, my case is an exception. I married a wonderful Catholic fellow and we are very happy. I say EXCEPTION because I know of cases of my own personal friends, two of whom are divorced, each with a baby. These girls were my friends in high school and they were what I considered then real sharp. I pray sincerely for these teen-agers because it is very difficult for a teen-ager to decide to be GOOD.

N. N.

N. N."

Never a Dull Issue

"It was a fortunate day when I picked up your magazine to glance at. Your article, *How to Go to Hell with Dignity*, was the eye-catcher. It was a tremendous article, as were all the articles in that issue.

Immediately I said that this was the magazine for my family. Up to this moment I have never found a dull issue. Keep up the wonderful work. Your magazine leads all others by far.

Highland Falls, N. Y.

W. A. R."

Complete Turn in Thinking

"THE LIGUORIAN was given to me as a gift by my sister and went unread for many issues — when one day I did take time to read one issue. I then read all the back copies and have yearly renewed my subscription. I cannot tell you of the tremendous amount of religious instruction I have received from this grand magazine, but I must, indeed, say I took a complete turn in thinking, speaking and acting in regard to the Negro situation. It is difficult to undo past deeply rooted feelings toward the Negro race. But thank God—your clear presentation of the issue made me realize how shamefully wrong I had been. I never did them any harm in any way —and always prayed for them. But yet I did their cause no good either, for I felt they should somehow all go away and leave me and mine alone. But now I realize that my three dear children would be no different in heart and soul if they had colored skin.

San Jose, Calif.

Mrs. M."

Not a Catholic

"I am not a Catholic but I read and enjoy THE LIGUORIAN. I have missed some issues but the ones I have read contain articles on timely subjects. I hope you will keep up the good and, I know, hard work.

Nashville, Tenn.

A. D."

• *No work is hard if it may help to bring even one soul closer to Christ and His Church, or even only help that person to know Christ and His Church better.*

The editors

QUESTIONS ABOUT WAR

Louis G. Miller, C.S.S.R.

A matter of pressing concern in this atomic age is the question: can war be justified? There is a school of thought which answers in the negative. Others, while making certain necessary distinctions, argue that the situation can still come about in which a nation would not only have the right but the duty to wage war.

Here we present in question and answer form our own considered views on this matter. We do not claim infallibility insofar as matters of opinion are concerned. Nevertheless, we believe that our conclusions are solidly based on Catholic tradition and current authoritative Catholic teaching.

Can war ever be justified?

The main stream of Catholic traditional teaching has always held that there are certain circumstances in which a nation is completely justified in waging war, if certain conditions are observed.

What evidence can you offer for this contention?

St. Augustine formulated Catholic thought in this matter in the fifth cen-

tury. His teaching was developed and clarified by St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. Theologians almost universally follow their principles. Conditions for a just war are laid down; but by the very fact that they establish conditions, they acknowledge that war is not always and everywhere evil, but may at times be justified.

In the practical order, these factors might be mentioned. St. John the Baptist, when soldiers came to him for advice, did not tell them to stop being soldiers. He merely said to them: "Plunder no one, accuse no one falsely, and be content with your pay." (Luke 3/14) Christ dealt freely with soldiers; in fact, He had words of high praise for a certain Roman centurion whose servant He healed. Among the early Christians there were many military men. St. Maurice and the Theban Legion might be mentioned. When they were about to be martyred for their refusal to worship false gods, Maurice said: "We are your soldiers, but we are also servants of the true God. We owe you military service and obedience, but we cannot renounce Him who is our

Creator and Master. . . . We readily oppose all your enemies, but we cannot dip our hands into the blood of innocent persons." St. Joan of Arc became a soldier to free France. St. Louis in the thirteenth century was a soldier all his life long. If at the end of his life he said: "I have loved war too much," one can scarcely conclude from this that he thought war was always and everywhere evil.

What are the conditions for a just war?

Father Francis Connell, C.S.S.R., following the classic summary of St. Thomas Aquinas, outlines them as follows:

In the first place, there must be a very grave reason for entering the war, which means that the nation in question has suffered some serious injustice from another sovereign power, such as the invasion of a considerable portion of territory.

Every means of rectifying the situation offering hope of a peaceful settlement must have been attempted.

It must be prudently anticipated that the benefits hoped for from the conflict will be adequate to compensate for the inevitable evil effects of the war, and there must be good reason to expect victory.

There must be an official declaration of war from the competent authorities of the nation, and they may proclaim such a declaration only when they are convinced in conscience that the war is just.

But is not killing someone even in the time of war against the fifth commandment?

No, because it is the legitimate exercise of self-defense. Suppose a householder is attacked by a second-story burglar with a loaded gun. In seeking to repel the intruder, the householder pushes him out of the window. The burglar falls and is killed. No court would convict the householder of murder in such a case, nor would God hold him responsible, so long as his honest effort had been only to defend himself and his family. So it is with nations. They have the right to defend themselves and to repel an invader by attack, even though this entails loss of life.

Could a Christian fight in a war he knew was unjust?

If he were certain of the injustice, he would not be permitted actually to fight in the war. He could, of course, devote himself to the care of the sick and wounded.

Suppose he were in doubt as to whether the war was just?

In such a case it seems to us he would be obliged to settle his conscience by the prior claim of obedience to the legitimate civil leaders of his nation.

Granted that in the past, a just war was possible, is it not true to say that nowadays the atom bomb makes a just war impossible?

There are some who answer yes to this question. They say that atomic warfare means total warfare, which looks to the total ruin of the enemy nation, civilians and military forces as well. This is contrary to the civilized tradition of war, which asserts

that even in time of war the use of force must be limited. Direct attack may be made only on the military forces of the enemy, or on the factories which supply those forces with their guns and ammunition.

On the other side, Mr. Thomas E. Murray, member of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, and outstanding Catholic layman, has gone firmly on record with the statement that the use of nuclear weapons in war does not inevitably mean the totalization of the conflict. A nuclear war can still be a limited war. "To believe otherwise," writes Mr. Murray, "is to deny that man is a rational being capable of controlling his own actions. It is to assert that American military men are incapable of making intelligent moral use of their new weapon."

Mr. Murray suggests that this nation concentrate increasingly on the development of nuclear weapons in the lower order of destructiveness, and equip itself with a wide range of weapons in this order. Such weapons will be sufficient for national defense against an aggressor, and in using them we shall not be ignoring the moral considerations which make total war repugnant to the Christian conscience.

We think that on this basis and within this framework there can certainly be a just war even with the use of atomic weapons. Certainly the nation has an obligation to take moral principles into account in any war-time use of the atom bomb. These moral principles might well preclude use of the hydrogen or thermonuclear bomb, whose force is of such tremen-

dous power as to exceed by far what might be needed for a specific military objective.

But we agree with Mr. Murray that "in the present situation of international lawlessness, a *total* renunciation of nuclear armaments by the United States would mean the betrayal of our moral tradition, which requires that we should not abandon the cause of justice, or leave ourselves unprepared to defend it effectively."

May a Catholic then, be a conscientious objector to all war?

Any person who truly feels obliged in conscience to be opposed to war has the obligation of following his conscience. At the same time, we believe that such a one is not in the main stream of Catholic thought. We believe his conscience is not properly informed and he is not in accord with objective truth in rejecting a doctrine held by the great majority of Catholic thinkers and theologians.

Has the pope taken a definite position in this matter?

Yes; in his Christmas letter of 1956, written while Hungary was in its turmoil of revolution, the Holy Father made his position clear:

"It is clear that in the present circumstances there can be verified in a nation a situation wherein every effort to avoid war being expended in vain, war for effective self-defense and with a hope of favorable outcome against unjust attack could not be considered unlawful.

"If therefore a body representative of the people and a government — both having been chosen by free elec-

tions, in a moment of extreme danger decide by legitimate instruments of internal and external policy on defensive precautions and carry out the plans which they consider necessary, they do not act immorally. Therefore a Catholic citizen cannot invoke his own conscience in order to refuse to serve and fulfill those duties the law imposes."

How would you sum up your stand in this matter?

We by no means advocate war as a means of solving the world's problems. We are in heartfelt accord with the United States bishops' statement of 1956: "War in modern times would be a nightmare of unimagin-

able horrors. It can only annihilate; it has no power to solve our problems. . . . Every possible means consistent with divine law and human dignity must be employed and exhausted to avoid the final arbitrament of nuclear warfare. . . ."

Yet it remains true that, as the bishops go on to say, "in the ultimate resort, it is the duty of every man to resist naked aggression." Death may be the consequence of his action, but there are worse things than death. To fight in a war, being certain that one's cause is right and just is, we are convinced, to perform a good action, and one which has upon it the blessing of God.

ATTENTION ON DECAY

The London Catholic *Tablet* made some shrewd observations recently apropos of recent trends in American moviemaking. They are worth repeating and pondering:

"*Baby Doll* is but the latest of a series of motion pictures by means of which Hollywood, in what appears to be a mood of almost pathological exhibitionism, invites the world to inspect the running sociological, administrative and moral sores of some aspects of life in the United States. Of this kind was *Black Tuesday*, about a prison break, *Blackboard Jungle*, about mixed-up kids in school, *Rebel Without Cause*, mixed-up teen-agers in trouble with parents and police, *Attack!* debunking the American army, and of the same formula, *From Here to Eternity* and *Battle Cry*, neither of which would inspire one with respect for the American armed forces. . . .

"Films like these must obviously present our American colleagues with considerable cause for misgiving, for while it is no bad thing 'to hold, as 'twere the mirror up to nature,' too many examples of such publicity cannot but invite the unwary to suppose that there is indeed something more 'rotten in the state of Denmark' than is indeed the case."

HE REMEMBERED THE SERMON

Father Mullaly made the statement from the pulpit that every blade of grass was a sermon. The next day he was mowing his lawn with great gusto when a passing parishioner shouted:

"That's right, Father. Cut 'em short."

FOR PARENTS OF RETARDED CHILDREN

Who can count the blessings a retarded child can bring to the members of a family? They who care for them and love them must become kinder still and more perfect spiritually.

GERARD BREITENBECK, C.S.S.R.

WE read in Sacred Scripture that one day, just before His passion and death, our divine Saviour was in the house of a man named Simon. Into the assembled group came Mary of Bethany, and there, before them all, she anointed the feet of Jesus with an ointment worth a great deal of money. Judas was shocked at her actions and asked, "Why this waste?" Our Lord quickly defended and explained the meaning of Mary's generous gesture and told of the great good Mary had done.

Today many ask, as Judas did, "Why this waste?" as they look upon our retarded children. They do not see the entire picture. They do not see it as the infinite plan of God. They see only the surface.

Previously we tried to show a parallel between the lives of the parents

of retarded children and the life of the Blessed Mother. This parallel exists not only in the sorrows but in the blessings and rewards that come from God. God asks, but He also gives. He will not be outdone in generosity. Let us continue with further thoughts on this question.

One of the greatest needs in the world today is love. Love is the basis of all peace and happiness.

Peace! How we long for it as we stand trembling in this age of uncertainty and of cold wars! Why are we so afraid, so confused and so miserable in this time of material prosperity? Why are so many finding it necessary to consult psychologists and psychiatrists? Often — very, very often — the answer is that love is lacking: love that acts, love that sacrifices, love that seeks union. Without that love, selfishness and self-centeredness reign. Without it families become disunited and nations are at variance one with another.

OVER and over, Sacred Scripture brings us lessons of love. God tells us: "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son."

"Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friend."

God, who is Love, God, who is infinitely happy and perfectly at peace, gives us the formula for peace and happiness. Love that acts, love that sacrifices, is the way to peace and happiness. Such love can make a hovel more joyous than a castle.

God in His love has permitted many a parent to be blessed with a handicapped child, so that His power, His love and His goodness may be manifest. It is manifest through the self-sacrifice, the complete self-forgetfulness, the unselfish love and devotion of these parents.

Sister Clare, directress of St. Mary of Providence School in Chicago, made the plea for love practical and concrete as she talked to a group of pediatricians. She answered, too, the question, "Why?" Here I would like to quote from Sister Clare's talk.

"My dear doctors: Only my great concern about the treatment of the little retarded child could give me the courage and audacity to talk before a group such as this. Yet the zeal in my heart welcomes this opportunity to plead with such a relevant group for the cause of this exceptional child. It bids me to say to you, who can do it, please, oh, please, give the little retarded child a chance. Don't take from her the only things she asks of life — the chance to be loved and the right to *belong* to a family group.

"When I started in this work some thirty years ago, I viewed the care and treatment of the retarded child

with cold and impersonal logic. Some retarded children, such as mongoloids, are recognizable at birth. We know they will never be normal. We know that they will never be independent, but always dependent. Therefore logically, it seems well to do something about it very early. And so it is often recommended that mothers do not even take the little retarded child home at all. It is suggested that the mother should not become attached to the little one. The other children would benefit by this procedure. This avoids embarrassment. The family will not feel that the unfortunate brother or sister is taking too much of the parents' time or love or money. Logic tries to soften its reasoning by adding some arguments to show that the child as well as the family benefits by the separation from the family circle. It is claimed that the retarded is happier among its equals. There she can compete. There she has friends. There she can enjoy a life geared to her level and understanding. So goes the argument logically. But the heart has more to say. I know that cold logic doesn't tell the whole story.

"I have lived with the retarded day in and day out for over thirty years. I have loved them and been loved by them. I know that logic is cold and often cruel, cruel to all concerned: to the retarded, to her parents, and to her sisters and brothers, to all of us. This reasoning is the source of many a heartache.

"Let me by actual case histories show you how and why my ideas concerning the care and treatment of

the retarded have changed. All names and personal identifications have been changed leaving the underlying facts to speak for themselves.

"First let me tell you about a girl we will call Mary. She was brought to us over fifteen years ago. Her parents were college graduates. They were crushed when they learned the truth from their doctor. This was their first child and she was definitely a mongoloid. We took her, although she was only a baby, because we felt it was the only way to save the marriage from shipwreck. We told the parents to go home, build the finest family life possible and we would love and cherish and care for their baby, even promising to reduce the board and fee for Mary's keep as each new baby arrived.

"Mary was the only baby in our school. Everyone loved her and played with her. It seemed that her life was full. She was happy. She sang before she talked; early she learned to dance, and she still does aesthetic dancing, as no one has ever seen a mongoloid dance. She started to school, learning to read and taking her little cards with new words printed on them to bed with her at night.

"Then something happened. She wasn't so happy any more. We began to wonder what was wrong with our little girl. Then one day she was heard to say as she sat off in a corner by herself: 'I do too have a mother. I am too going home.'

"The family had grown away from her, the parents had steeled them-

selves to count this little girl out of their family. It was not their fault; and it was not easy for them. They were acting on what they believed to be the best advice given by those wiser in these matters than themselves. The other two children had never known their retarded sister. We tried to find a substitute experience for little Mary to take away the ache left by wanting to *belong* to a family. Everything failed.

"We began to work on the family. It wasn't hard for mother and dad to take little Mary openly to their hearts. But for her sisters it wasn't easy. They found it hard at first to accept this little sister of theirs who was different. In the beginning she seemed like an outsider, but now they are gradually getting adjusted to the idea. The consequence is: as they come to give her love and attention, they, themselves, are becoming nobler and finer children because of this loving and protecting attitude to their little sister. Their mother tells me: 'The girls are so much kinder since Mary has come back into the family.'

"This family gave Mary a sense of belonging, affection and attention and she gave back to them the only thing she had to give: love, a sense of kindness, a habit of understanding. Surely these are marvelous qualities anyone can be proud to possess and own. So, too, it is with every retarded child. This child needs love. It needs a sense of *belonging*. In exchange, the little retarded child gives us the opportunity to act for it, to sacrifice our feelings of selfishness

and pride, to unite the family in a close bond of affection and devotion.

"True love, when practiced, changes things; it deepens attitudes, it broadens feelings; it teaches tender understanding, it builds up in all of us finer and better characters. Whatever tends to diminish selfishness helps to build finer and better characters and a happier and better world to live in.

"A famous judge in one of our large cities was asked one day why God gave him a retarded child. The answer of this most successful public man is most inspiring. 'Why? God knew what he was doing; God knew best. I have three very successful lawyer sons. Pride could easily be my besetting sin. God sent me a retarded daughter to keep me humble.' Instead of selfishness and pride, humility came to make of this man a better and nobler individual."

TRUE love, as we said, is a bond that unites. One of the great cancers of modern society is divorce. When parents and families accept really and truly the fundamental principle of giving the retarded child a sense of belonging, the little one gives back to the family a gift of family stability. Again we cannot generalize but we can quote Sister Clare who speaks from the years of experience with retarded children and their families: "There is an ennobling of the members of a family when there is a retarded child in the family; there is given a sense of belonging, a sense of love. They stay together. Only in about five or six of our private cases are the parents separated."

We could go on giving reason after reason on "Why the Retarded Child?" We could show how the prayers of these children win countless graces for mankind. We could narrate how these children forgive and are quick to ask to be forgiven. Surely these are no mean lessons for the world today. We could tell how the spirituality of a parish was raised in a few short years because the people of this parish under the supervision of their pastor took over the voluntary visiting of these children at least once a month.

Sister Clare in her plea to the doctors quotes a touching case of little Margaret. "Like Mary she came to us as a baby. Like Mary she has not gone home, but unlike the case of Mary, her parents and sisters have visited her regularly from the beginning. She knows she has folks who love her, who bring her gifts and give her attention and love. In the early years we often heard Margaret say: 'I'll tell my mother on you.' She is secure in her love of and for her family and so she has no great emotional problem."

Into the lives of the parents of every retarded child there comes the most practical question: "Are we to put our child in a specialized school, a state institution, a home dealing particularly with them? What are we to do?"

This is a question neither I nor anyone else can answer in a universal yes or a universal no. There is no hard and fast rule to use in making the decision for home or school care

for a retarded child. This much we can say. There must be places where these children can receive particular training suited to their physical and mental condition. Just as society must provide normal children with the opportunity to receive physical, intellectual and spiritual education, so, too, it must take care of retarded children.

Each individual case must be judged on the recommendation of professional advice both spiritual and medical. Whether the child will be placed in a specialized school or remain in the confines of the family is a decision the particular parents must make after considering the greatest good to be accomplished.

THREE conclusions, however, become very clear and definite in our consideration of this question. 1. Parents and families must definitely face the fact and accept the fact that God has sent them a retarded child. Calamities like this do not happen without God's permission and providence, that is, without His definitely relating them to the final happiness of all concerned. It is not a stigma, it is a great blessing. 2. Society must provide adequate facilities for the specialized training these children need. Not everything can be done immediately. We must work toward that end so that the facilities these children need can be made available to them and their parents. 3. Whether the child is placed in a specialized school or not, each retarded child must be given an assurance of *belonging* and an assurance of love.

It is keeping the child away from the family group that causes so much suffering to all concerned. When the child is isolated from the family the parents are left with "guilt feelings" as Sister Clare says. "Am I doing the right thing? Am I sure my child is happy? Is he being treated well?"

"If you recommend a state institution," Sister Clare continues to the doctors, "it should be spoken of as a school. Recommend that parents visit the child regularly wherever she is placed. Then they can feel sure of the welfare and happiness of the child who must be separated from them. Brothers and sisters can learn tender understanding and solicitous love. The child, himself or herself, has the security of its family.

"The case of little Betty will bring out my contention. Betty's parents were despondent when they came to St. Mary of Providence with their little child. A doctor had recommended that they place her, the love of their life, in a state institution. In trying to convince them that this was the right thing to do, he endeavored to make them believe that she would never have any feelings toward them or concern. He rather likened her to a vegetable. Just the opposite was true. Betty came to St. Mary's; she grew; she learned; she gave her parents love. As they watched her grow in love of God, their regular visits gave them something also. They took from her a growing faith that has brought peace to replace despair, and a hope and faith that carries them happily now through life. They will never feel again that they have to

carry their cross alone. They have found their God, their help, their consolation. All this happened through their little retarded child."

Spiritual principles are all that will support us in moments of inevitable trial and discouragement. Sister Clare concludes her plea to the doctors: "Who can measure the good these little ones do. Perhaps we are kinder and better people for having lived with them and loved them. How great has been the good that has come to

us through their prayers that are offered so sincerely, so unquestionably."

WHEN an opportunity is given to us to develop love, charity, kindness, mercy and tenderness, surely there is no waste. Too often an expected earthly reward becomes too large a part of the motivation for the charity we do to make it worth very much in the eyes of God, but here when we care for retarded children and help them, motives and rewards are necessarily all spiritual.

VACATION AT WORK

One summer evening when Thomas A. Edison returned home from work, his wife said:

"You have worked long enough without a rest. You should take a vacation."

"But where shall I go?" he asked.

"Decide where you would rather be than anywhere else on earth and go there."

"Very well," promised Edison, "I will go tomorrow."

The next morning found him back at work in his laboratory.

CLEAR CONVICTIONS!

An electrician, called to make repairs at the Maryknoll mission at Uji Yamada, Japan, had difficulty in locating the source of trouble. While trying to find it he mixed up all the wires, and the missionary in charge of the work gave him "a good dressing down."

The electrician thought about the incident all day. He finally approached the pastor and said to him:

"I like authority and I want to join a Church that has such clear convictions."

Maryknoll Notes

FIFTH RATE ENTERTAINMENT

Modern crowds no longer reason, says the *Catholic Review*: they merely look, register, feel, thrill, suffer together like synchronized reactors. They are a great collective being whose imagination is governed by producers of such things as movies and television shows. Whether this is true or not, there must be some danger in the passivity with which immense numbers of people today tolerate fifth-rate entertainment. Surely mentality is being shaped when tens of thousands allow the level of their appreciation to be debased to the lowest common cultural denominator.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS

No Color Bar in Sanctity

The so-called racial question is without doubt a crucial difficulty of our times. Feelings and emotions are easily aroused, and sometimes in the heat of discussion and argument, basic facts are overlooked.

This year, 1957, marks the 150th anniversary of the canonization of a saint whose life points up the fact that the Catholic Church, in this racial question, teaches what she knows to be the truth, and means what she teaches. The saint is St. Benedict the Moor, born in 1524 at San Fratello, Sicily. St. Benedict was a Negro, and his parents were descendants of slaves from Ethiopia.

In canonizing St. Benedict and in holding him up for imitation by all men, the Church illustrates in dramatic fashion these basic truths. All men are equally the creatures of God. All men are equally redeemed by Christ, the Son of God. To all men, regardless of race or color of skin, is offered an equally pressing invitation to the most noble ideal of human existence: self-perfection here and eternal bliss in heaven. She does not hesitate to say of St. Benedict: here was a model of perfection. She has

declared him worthy of the highest honors of the altar. More she cannot do for any prince or potentate who ever lived.

It is related that St. Benedict, as a young man, while plowing in the field, was taunted one day by passers-by because of the dark color of his skin. A holy hermit defended him, and the young Negro was so attracted to the hermit that he followed him and himself undertook a life of prayer and self-abnegation.

Later on Benedict joined the Franciscan Order. The friars soon recognized his holiness, came to ask his guidance in the ways of God, and soon he was made superior of a large monastery. Here he edified all as his sanctity shone ever more brightly. He died in 1589, at the age of 65, Pope Pius VII canonized him in 1807.

All who desire interracial peace should pray to him for guidance and for help.

Unfinished Business

According to the French publication *Informations Catholiques Internationales*, as quoted by *Work*, there are six key problems which confront the Church in this year of our Lord, 1957. We think the summary is a good one and should stir up thought.

1. *Racial segregation.* In the United States and in South Africa the Church has to fight the myth of racial superiority. As an example of the problem, the editor points out the arrest of 150 South Africans, some of them clergymen, on the charge that they "insisted that all men are equal."

2. *Independence for colonial peoples.* Asia and Africa are seething with nationalistic movements. In this ferment, the Church must be truly Catholic, seeking international justice for all.

3. *Social justice.* There are two extreme conditions in the world. In Latin America, Spain and elsewhere, a great many people find it difficult to get the bare necessities of life. On the other hand, in Germany and the United States automation and atomic power are creating a new technical civilization of abundance. There are profound moral aspects to both conditions in which the Church is vitally concerned.

4. *Co-existence.* The Church is still persecuted in the Soviet-dominated countries of Asia and Europe. What does the future hold for Christians in Eastern Germany and Poland?

5. *Birth control.* The vast campaign in favor of contraceptives during 1956 will continue, especially in countries like Japan and India. In this matter, of course, the Church proclaims the law of God, not subject to human alteration. While holding to this principle, she will encour-

age those who seek other solutions to the problems of over-population and sub-standard scale of living.

6. *Freedom of education.* In some nations it is a question of the state monopolizing education. In others, young people are not able to receive any religious education at all. In this area also the Church is vitally concerned.

Catholic Rural Life Problem

A recent survey revealed that in rural America, among 38 religious bodies, Catholicism ranked thirty-third. The statistic is impressive as pointing up how overwhelmingly urban is the Catholic population. One might almost make a rule out of the statement that the larger the city, the greater will be the percentage of Catholics. It should not be surprising if this has produced an attitude of "city-mindedness" in the Catholic outlook. Unfortunately, this has been accompanied only too often by a failure to grasp the importance of developing a strong rural Catholicity.

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference, a branch of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, tries heroically to counteract this neglect. Begun by Father (later Bishop) Edwin O'Hara in 1923, the Conference has these aims:

1. To care for the underprivileged Catholics living on the land.
2. To keep on the land Catholics who are now settled there.
3. To settle more Catholics on the land.
4. To convert non-Catholics in the rural areas.

Thus it functions as an agency within the Church for the application of Catholic philosophy to the sphere of agriculture, provides a forum for the discussion of rural problems and endorses and sponsors projects which favor the solution of these problems.

A chief problem is the lack of priests in the rural areas. The Glenmary Missioners, founded in 1937, have as their specific purpose to train priests for this work. They point up the fact that in the United States there are still 819 counties without a resident priest, and 73,000 towns and places without priests. The Church can scarcely advance in this vast "no-priest" land without devoted workers to instruct the people in the truth. Glenmary has made a good beginning: some 157 priests, students and brothers, and 78 sisters are working in or preparing to work in this important field, where only about four percent of the rural population is Catholic. In many areas not even a beginning has been made.

Certainly charity and zeal should prompt all Catholics, no matter how urban their background, to be interested in the problems of the rural Church, and to do what they can to support efforts being made to overcome them.

Dangerous Drug Stores

It used to be thought that teen-agers could not get into much trouble by hanging around drug stores, eating ice creams and drinking cokes, and kidding with one another.

How many parents know that some of the drug stores in their neigh-

borhood may possibly be the worst occasion of sin for their youngsters? Most drug stores nowadays carry newsstands, piled with a hundred different magazines. Some of them have on their racks the filthiest, the most obscene publications we have ever seen. Other drug store managers do not place such publications on their racks, but they keep them "under the counter," for anybody, teen-aged or not, who wants to buy them.

We are not making this up. We have visited some of these drug stores. We have paged through some of the pornographic magazines and paper books that they sell. We can attest that nobody, not even elderly men and women, can read some of the things we have seen without danger to their souls. For teen-agers, the stuff is spiritual dynamite.

Therefore parents have an obligation to find out, if their teen-aged sons and daughters hang around a drug store, what kind of drug store it is. If one in their neighborhood carries the kind of rotten literature we have seen, it is as fertile a spawning place for impurity as a cheap burlesque show.

And druggists have a tremendous obligation in this matter. They may not shrug it off by saying that "the news company sends out all these magazines; I don't have time to look at them all; I just put them on the racks." They don't set out poison in aspirin bottles, neither should they set out spiritual poison on their magazine and book racks.

In many cities restaurants are required to paste a sticker marked "A," "B," or "C," on their window or door. "A" means that the kitchen has been inspected and found clean and safe from danger of disease to those who eat in the restaurant. "B" and "C" of course mean that the place is "less" and "least" clean. Perhaps there should be stickers for drugstores with magazine and book racks. "C" would mean: "If you are looking for filth, we've got it."

In Defense of Votive Candles

Often one hears a controversy among Catholics in which sides are taken for and against the Catholic practice of lighting votive candles in Catholic churches. Some are against it, as messy, a fire hazard, not very appealing (to them), etc. Others find it a wonderful attraction, and can scarcely visit a church or a shrine without lighting a candle.

Those on the latter side of the argument will find a kindred spirit in the famous English novelist and recent convert, G. B. Stern. In the fourth chapter of her latest book, *The Way It Worked Out*, she dwells at length on how she feels (and how many of her friends and correspondents feel) about the small sacramental of lighting a candle on a votive stand.

One of her most delightful paragraphs on the subject goes as follows:

"It may be one of my more childish affections (and none of them are particularly adult) but I cannot help loving to light candles in Catholic churches, or have them lit for me all

over the world in huge cathedrals or the smallest wayside chapel. I realize, of course, that they are not essential to faith and prayer, not a big important part of Christianity; but they are pretty as flowers are pretty, and they do remain behind to say you have been there, an anonymous you, and other people coming in may think: 'What a lot of candles burning in front of St. Antony or St. Therese' — and of course in front of our Lady; a coin tinkling into a box for anybody's right to display their little passing act of tribute in the only way in which it can be made visible and decorative, for the hard-working sacristan would have something to say if 'anybody' were allowed to bring in flowers and set them up wherever they pleased in the church."

There is much more of homey comment and delicious anecdote on this subject in Miss Stern's chapter dealing with it. Those who see only "the mess" that dripping candles cause, or who have no sentiment in this particular matter, will surely be moved by all of it to the realization that in a small way it means a great deal to other good people.

GETTING THROUGH

While a group was dining in a Chinese restaurant, one of the musicians struck up a vaguely familiar melody, but none of the group could remember its name. They called the magnificently clad waiter and asked him to find out what the man was playing. The waiter paddled across the dining room and then returned in triumph to announce: "Violin!"

LIGUORIANA

Why Censorship?

By St. Alphonsus

Selected and Edited by

John P. Schaefer, C.S.S.R.

IN both the Old and New Testaments God has insistently commanded that by every manner and means we avoid heretical men. In his second Epistle St. John, for instance, wrote: "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or say to him, 'Welcome.'" And wisely did St. Paul say: "Avoid profane and empty babblings for they contribute much to ungodliness, and their speech spreads like a cancer." (2 Tim. 2/16-17)

If we are, therefore, commanded to avoid evil companions, how much more diligent should we be in avoiding bad books. For the written word can corrupt more easily than the spoken word. A word spoken in conversation disappears immediately. Yet St. Paul says that it spreads like a cancer and is capable of wounding one mortally. How much more evil can a bad book bring? It is capable of becoming a *perpetual* source of subversion.

A bad book is permitted entrance into a home into which its author would never be permitted entrance. If religion and public peace cannot be maintained against the spread of

subversive doctrines and opinions contrary to public morals, how much more inconsistent would it be to allow such teachings to be spread in writing? For such doctrines and morality have a far more permanent effect when read than when heard.

Just as pious reading fosters the virtues, so, on the other hand, does bad reading promote vice. And it leads all the more strongly because men are more prone to vice than to virtue. St. Basil does well to call books the *food of souls*. For just as man experiences pleasure in eating and the food nourishes and becomes a part of him, so also is a book read with pleasure and easily becomes a part of the reader. In a way, one who reads a certain author makes himself his disciple.

Unscrupulous writers will naturally strive to conceal their wares, so that error seems like truth. And not only simple people, but even the learned, are deceived. They will never teach error openly, but will seek all kinds of specious reasonings to cloak and conceal their poison. It is no wonder that the Church applies to them the words of Christ: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheeps' clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves." (Matt. 7/15)

Innumerable examples, confirming what we have just said, could be cited.

But for the sake of brevity we will give but a few. — Bardasanes of Syria had but recently been converted to the faith. But his piety and solicitude for the spread of the truth, both in word and in writing, won for him the admiration of his new Catholic friends. When, however, he began to read certain writings of the Valentinians he not only subscribed to their errors, but led many others into heresy with him.

ST. Jerome testifies that the countries of Spain and Portugal had not been affected by heretical teachings, until the books of the Priscillianists were spread throughout the country. History also records that Avitus, a Spanish priest, fell into heresy by reading the writings of Origen. And this despite the fact that he had heard of their reputation, and was warned of their errors by St. Jerome.

For these reasons, councils of the Church, popes and pious princes, both by word and pen, by censures and other punishments, have done all in their power to destroy books which were capable of harming faith or morals. For these reasons, too, the Fathers of the Church have striven, in their own writings, to protect the faithful from books of this kind. St. Isidore, for instance, wrote that to read wicked writings is the same as to sacrifice to the devil.

It has been the custom of most civilized nations to destroy harmful reading matter. When King Joachim received from Baruch a book which had been translated by Jeremias, he

feared that it would cause scandal to the Jews. Therefore, he commanded that it be burned. The Athenians expelled Protagoras from the senate and publicly burned his books, because he raised doubts in them as to existence of the gods. In a similar manner, the Greeks burned the books of Epicure.

There are, also, many examples of such censorship in the civilization of the Romans. Caesar, for instance, studiously avoided reading the book, *On the Art of Loving*, and sent its author, Ovid, into exile.

Bishops and pastors should take special care that obscene books and those which deal with illicit love do not fall into the hands of their charges. Origen calls such books, "Cups of Babylon," spreading poison. And Plato said that impure books should be forbidden in every state. Throughout the kingdom of Sparta, it was forbidden to read or even to have in one's possession the books of Archilochus, because they contained obscenity.

Such are frequently, and misleadingly called *romances*. Though many of them contain obscenities, they are not usually condemned by ecclesiastical law. For, in the *Index* are condemned only such books as *professedly* spread, narrate or teach obscene or impure matters. The natural law itself, however, forbids the reading of such books, because of the grave harm which they can bring to readers. For a poison is all the more harmful because of the cleverness with which it is hidden.

PARENTS, too, are obliged to keep such books from the hands of their children. And if they fail to do so, they cannot be excused from fault. Added to the sinfulness of such reading is the fact that the reading of obscene books contributes to the neglect and even to the despising of useful studies.

Although himself a man of low morals, Luther wrote: "The books of Juvenal, Martial, Catullus, and others must be thrown out of our schools and all society. For they write of impure and obscene matters and cannot be read without grave damage to our youth." Even more harmful is the damnable book of Boccaccio. In my opinion it is more harmful to our youth than the works of Luther and Calvin.

Some might say that such works are "artistic," that they teach the

proper use of one's language. St. Augustine answers these arguments well: "In such artistic words obscenity and baseness are more easily described and taught. I do not condemn the words . . . but the wine of error which is contained and spread in them."

I will conclude with the following words of caution. All theologians teach that no one is able to read the works of heretics without the proximate danger of serious harm, unless they have studied theology for at least three or four years. If, therefore, nations have thought it necessary, for the preservation of their false religions, to forbid the reading of books opposed to them, how much more incumbent is it upon the Church to forbid the reading of books which would be harmful to the true religion?

❧ ❧ ❧

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BOOK REVIEWS

Thomas Tobin, C.S.S.R.

We recommend that books listed or reviewed in **THE LIGUORIAN** be purchased at your local bookstore. If you cannot obtain the book in that way, you may write to **THE LIGUORIAN** for further information.

Fundamental Marriage Counseling

John R. Cavanagh, M.D.

The preface adequately explains the purpose of this valuable volume. This book is not one which you are likely to read from cover to cover in one sitting. It contains, however, information which you will need if you counsel married people. It assembles for your use a large mass of material which would require prolonged search if you went to the original sources. It is not a book to which a physician would refer for anatomical facts or other information that is strictly medical. However, it does supply all of the medical information that specialists in other fields would need. The moral theologians would not find here a complete treatise, but all other specialists will find a complete discussion of moral problems relating to marriage.

This is a book for specialists written by ten specialists under the direction of Doctor John R. Cavanagh, a practicing psychiatrist. The five sections treat the following basic aspects of marriage: biological, sexual, fertility, social and religious. This, in the reviewer's opinion, is the best book published on the subject of marriage and will help any person professionally engaged in the counseling of married couples and also help married people who need more information on some problem of their marriage.

(Bruce, \$8.00)

The Scapegoat

Daphne Du Maurier

This novel by the popular Daphne Du Maurier is the story of an Englishman and a Frenchman who are so much alike in appearance that they could be mistaken for identical twins. The plot centers around the complications that arise when the Englishman takes the place of the twin in his family. The result is not a great novel in the Du Maurier tradition of Rebecca but an interesting tale for a few idle hours.

(Doubleday, \$3.95)

A Practical Catholic Dictionary

Jessie Corrigan Pegis

There has long been need of a handy reference book of Catholic words and phrases for the convert and also the born Catholic. This need has been fulfilled by Jessie Corrigan Pegis, the wife of Dr. Anton C. Pegis. The author has striven to give a fuller explanation rather than a brief definition. The appendices give short sketches of the better-known saints, a list of the popes and the names and dates of important recent papal encyclicals. A good reference book for the Catholic home.

(Hanover House, \$2.95)

A Distant Drum

Charles Bracelen Flood

Like many second novels this does not measure up to the success of the first novel, *Love Is a Bridge*. It is the story of Patrick Kingsgrant and his coming to maturity during the Korean War. The central character is a Catholic but there is no dimension to him or the other people in the book and the narration noticeably drags. There are better novels being published today.

(Houghton Mifflin Co., \$4.50)

The Catholic Booklist 1957

Edited by Sister Mary Luella

We always welcome the new issue of the Catholic Booklist, the annotated list of current books in the fields of Bibliography and Reference, Biography, Education, Fiction, Fine Arts, History, Literature, Mission Literature, Philosophy, Religion, Social Sciences, Children's Books. A fine selection with capsule criticism of the books. A must for libraries as well as for anyone who wants some guidance to the better Catholic books.

(Rosary College, \$.75)

The Catholic Viewpoint on Race Relations

Rev. John La Farge, S.J.

This is the first volume of a new series which will examine various problems that confront American Catholics. The topic chosen is a very vital one and the author is a priest with wide experience and great reputation in the field of the relations between the white and the colored races. Much of the material has already appeared in previous books but is brought together under five heads: The Problem of Race Relations; The Catholic Position; The Record; The Principles; What the Individual Can Do. A balanced presentation of a vexing problem.

(Hanover House, \$2.95)

The Catholic Priest in the Modern World

James A. Magner

In the foreword Cardinal Stritch points out the continuing need of new books on the priesthood to gather in one book what saints and scholars have written through the centuries and to adopt these ageless truths to modern life. Father James A. Magner is eminently qualified for this task by his knowledge and his years of experience in the priesthood. He presents fifteen very practical chapters on such topics as the personality of the priest, spiritual, cultural, and social life, the house, the sermon, the liturgy, counseling, parish societies, education, social welfare and parochial records. This book is particularly recommended to the seminarian and the newly-ordained priest, but with the suggestion that it is an excellent refresher course on the fundamentals of his life for the priest a few years away from his ordination.

(Bruce, \$4.75)

The Flight

Ruth Stephan

This is a most unusual novel of high literary value, a book that passes almost unnoticed and yet one which is highly rewarding for the one who discovers it. For twenty years Ruth Stephan has been interested in the seventeenth century and Queen Christina of Sweden. Christina, the only child of Gustavus Adolphus, the military champion of Protestantism during the thirty-years war, abandoned the faith of her father, abdicated her throne, and hastened to Rome to be accepted into the Catholic Church. Miss Stephan uses the literary device of making a novel so personal that it naturally falls into the presentation of an autobiography. The imagery and psychological insight carry the plot of the novel along very quickly and smoothly. This reviewer found *The Flight* one of the better novels that are difficult to put down.

(Alfred A. Knopf, \$4.00)

Joseph Most Just

Francis Filas, S.J.

Father Filas has issued his third book, *Joseph Most Just* in his campaign to have St. Joseph better known and loved. Unlike the two previous volumes in the trilogy this book is more theological than devotional in scope. The chapters consider the dignity, holiness, privileges, patronage and place in the liturgy of St. Joseph; the two appendices treat of devotion to St. Joseph during the past four hundred years and the resolutions of the International Session of Studies on St. Joseph. Scholarly and readable, this book is a calm examination of the role of St. Joseph in the scheme of theology.

(Bruce, \$3.50)

LUCID \ / INTERVALS



The production manager was interviewing a man for a job.

"How long did you work in your last place?" he asked.

"Fifty years."

"How old are you?"

"I'm thirty-five."

"How could you work fifty years when you are only thirty-five now?"

"Overtime!"

Jill: "Annette, why are you driving so fast?"

Annette: "The brakes won't work, so I want to get to where I'm going before I have an accident."

The teacher was testing her pupils' knowledge of proverbs.

"Cleanliness is next to what?" she asked.

"Impossible!" a small boy replied feelingly.

The first-grade teacher took one look at Wilmer and knew that he was going to give her trouble. But when she started to explain arithmetic to her class she was pleased to see that he was paying close attention. When she had done several problems on the blackboard, she asked: "Are there any questions?"

"Yes," said Wilmer. "Where do them little numbers go when you rub them out?"

A group of soil conservationists were making a tour through a badly eroded, rocky section of the hill country. At one stop, a grizzled old farmer told the visitors: "My forefathers fought for this here land." Then looking out across the barren, gullied fields, he added wryly: "They wuz the hotheaded type, I guess."

Friend: "That must be very tricky work — making bridges for people's teeth."

Dentist: "Yes, it is at times. But it's nothing compared to making people come across."

A veterinarian was instructing a farmer about a suitable method of administering medicine to a horse.

"Simply place this powder in a metal pipe about two feet long, put one end of the pipe well back in the horse's mouth and blow the powder down his throat."

Shortly afterwards the farmer came running into the vet's office in a very distressed condition. His clothes were covered with powder and his face was a sickly color.

"What's the matter?" asked the vet.

"I'm dying!" sputtered the farmer hoarsely. "The horse blew first."

The teacher, always ready to introduce art to her pupils, held a copy of the Mona Lisa up before her class.

"Children," she said, "look at this carefully. It's one of the most famous paintings in the world. As a matter of fact, it is worth thousands of dollars, and was stolen from the Louvre years ago."

One little boy's expression was so eager that the gratified teacher beamed at him. "William, did you want to say something?"

"Miss Murphy," he said conspiratorially, "aren't you ever going to give it back?"

Sylvia: "When I applied for a job the manager had the nerve to ask if my punctuation was good."

Mylvia: "What did you tell him?"

Sylvia: "I said I'd never been late for work in my life."

BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

HEADLINERS

(Number in parenthesis refers to classification according to rating used in general list.)

Peyton Place (IV)—*Metalious*
 Compulsion (III)—*Levin*
 The Philadelphian (IIb)—*Powell*
 The Blue Camellia (IIa)—*Keyes*
 The Fountain Overflows (I)—*West*
 The Scapegoat (IIa)—*Du Maurier*
 The Last Angry Man (III)—*Green*
 Stopover: Tokyo (I)—*Marquand*
 Don't Go Near the Water (IV)—*Brinkley*
 Twilight for the Gods (IIa)—*Gann*
 The Tribe That Lost Its Head (IIb)—*Monsarrat*
 The Etruscan (IIb)—*Waltari*

I. Suitable for general reading:

The Blind Villain—*Berckman*
 The Lively Arts of Sister Gervaise—*Bonn*
 Victoria, Albert and Mrs. Stevenson—*Boykin*
 The Late Miss Trimming—*Carnac*
 The Great Giveaway—*Castle*
 Murder on Their Minds—*Coxe*
 The Living Sea—*Crompton*
 The Lion's Share—*Crowther*
 Death of a Navy—*D'Albas*
 Father of the Family—*Geissler*
 No More Comrades—*Heller*
 Europe in Color—*Holiday*
 Dictionary of American-English Usage—*Nicholson*
 And Live Alone—*Pitkin*
 Death in the South Atlantic—*Powell*
 His Was the Fire—*Styles*
 The Trumpet Shall Sound—*Tomlinson*
 Gale Force—*Trevor*
 The Rain and the Fire and the Will of God—*Wetzel*
 Adenauer—*Weymar*

II. Suitable only for adults:

A. Because of advanced style and contents:

Last Recollections of My Uncle Charles—*Balchin*
 The Last Flowers—*Barrett*
 Jane—*Bottom*
 Fundamental Marriage Counseling—*Cavanagh*
 The Dynamics of World History—*Dawson*
 A Man Against Insanity—*De Kruif*
 The Megstone Plot—*Garve*
 The Lisbon Earthquake—*Kendrick*
 Salvation of the Unbeliever—*Lombardi*
 The Homecoming Game—*Nemerov*
 The Winds of Time—*Oliver*
 The Man Who Found His Way—*O'Rourke*
 The Reluctant Abbess—*Trouncer*
 The Case of Cornelia Connelly—*Wadham*
 Occult Phenomena—*Wetzel*
 The Organization Man—*Whyte*

B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:

The Headwaters—*Binns*
 The Spiral Road—*De Hartog*
 Give the Devil His Due—*Graaf*
 The Odyssey of Thaddeus Baxter—*Lund*
 I, Madame Tussaud—*Martin*
 Little Brother Fate—*Roberts*
 Law West of Fort Smith—*Shirley*
 A Haunted Land—*Stow*

III. Permissible for the discriminating adult:

The Obsession of Emmet Booth—*Albrand*
 The Towers of Trebizond—*Macaulay*
 The Black Obelisk—*Remarque*
 I Take the Rap—*Shelly*

IV. Not recommended to any reader:

Ferguson—*Kruger*

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